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ISLAM AND MODERNISM IN EGYPT

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AT CAIRO
ORIENTAL STUDIES

ISLAM AND MODERNISM IN EGYPT

A STUDY OF THE MODERN REFORM MOVEMENT
INAUGURATED BY MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH

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PREFACE

THIS book is the first part of a dissertation which was submitted, in August 1928, to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Chicago (U.S.A.), Department of Old Testament, in candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Its publication has been made possible by the decision of the Faculty of the School of Oriental Studies of the American University, Cairo, Egypt, with which the author of this work has for some years been associated, to include the work as a monograph in its series of Oriental Studies.

The second part of the dissertation, which is not being published at the present time, for various reasons, consists of a translation into English of a work on the Islāmic Caliphate by 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq, one of the younger and more liberal school of Egyptian writers of to-day. This work, published in 1925 under the title *Al-Islām wa uṣūl al-ḥukm* ('Islām and the Fundamentals of Authority'; sub-title: *A Study of the Caliphate and Government in Islām*), aroused a furor of opposition in Egypt at the time of its publication by reason of its liberal views. What is the origin of these revolutionary views? In particular, do they bear any relation, as might naturally be conjectured, to the modern reform movement in Egypt, inaugurated by Muḥammad 'Abduh, the late Grand Muftī of Egypt, who died in 1905? Or do they connect, rather, with the works of European scholars? The consideration of these and similar questions which naturally arise in connexion with a work like that of 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq, led to the preparation of an introductory study to accompany the translation, in which an effort is made to set forth the origin and development of the modern reform movement, to estimate the extent of its influence, and to discover whether any relation exists between the ideas of Muḥammad 'Abduh and those of the author whose work was translated and other writers who, like him, belong to the modern Egyptian School. The form and contents of the introductory study are sufficiently general, however, and of such general connexion with

the translation, that it can be published separately in the form in which it now appears.

This study is offered by the author to the public with much diffidence; in the hope that scholars familiar with the field covered may find something of value in it, even though such European scholars as Goldziher, Horten, Hartmann and others, and such Egyptian scholars as Professor Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq, in collaboration with M. Bernard Michel, have preceded with studies in European languages concerning the work of Muḥammad 'Abduh. It is not claimed for this work that it presents anything new, not heretofore discovered, with reference to the life and teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh; although it may be said, with some show of justice, that it sets these forth with greater fullness than has been done heretofore, and, in particular, that it gives some account of the later developments of the movement. In any case, there would seem to be room for a work in English on this subject. The author cherishes the hope, also, that a somewhat wider public of those who wish to follow the developments that are taking place in modern Islām and in the thought life of Islāmic countries may find the work not without interest.

The work is published practically as presented in dissertation form; such changes only have been made as were necessary to take account of publications relating to the subject that have appeared since the work was written. Particular mention should be made of the admirable series of *Studies in Contemporary Arabic Literature*, by Professor H. A. R. Gibb, reprinted from the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, London; and the valuable biographical sketches in *Leaders in Contemporary Arabic Literature*, by Tāhir Khemirī and Professor Dr. G. Kampffmeyer, reprinted 1930, from *Die Welt des Islams*. The present writer has been gratified to find his own views confirmed at a number of points by these studies, and, in other instances, has received help from them which he gladly acknowledges. The recent publication of greatest concern, however, to a work dealing with Muḥammad 'Abduh, is volume i of the *Tārīkh* or 'Biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh', by Muḥammad Rashīd Ridā, which appeared in the latter months of 1931. This long-

awaited volume by the chief disciple of 'Abduh, who has carried on his tradition, must remain the principal source of information regarding the life and work of the great Egyptian reformer. The second volume, containing 'Abduh's principal contributed articles and briefer works, and the third, containing biographical and eulogistic accounts which appeared at the time of his death, were already available. But, until the appearance of the recent volume, the only biography of considerable length concerning him was that from the pen of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā which was printed in vol. viii (1905) of *Al-Manār*, the monthly journal of the 'Abduh party. The volume which has just now appeared contains a wealth of incident and detail concerning events and persons; throws most interesting and valuable sidelights on modern Egyptian history; reveals inner details of the various intrigues, political or otherwise, in which 'Abduh was involved, sometimes as author but more frequently as victim—which is the principal reason why publication of the biography in its present form has been possible only in recent years; and, in short, would be considered, with its more than one thousand pages, as the last and fullest source-book for a biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh, were not the publication of a supplementary volume promised, containing additional documentary material. But a comparison of the recent volume with the earlier and briefer biography reveals that the main outlines of the 'Life', even down to the more important details, remain the same; so that little rewriting of the present study has been necessitated by the appearance of the larger biography. Page references to the new volume have been added in the footnotes for the most important facts and statements; but in many instances references to the earlier biography have been considered sufficient.

The footnotes, citing supporting authorities or making explanatory comments, have been retained for the sake of those who may wish to verify statements or views expressed. The general reader who is not concerned about authorities and to whom a system of footnotes is distracting, will find that these footnotes can, for the most part, be safely disregarded.

With reference to the ever-troublesome question of the transliteration of Arabic words, it has seemed best to make use of all the diacritical marks necessary to indicate the Arabic characters, and the length-marks above words to indicate the long vowels, even in words such as Muḥammad, Islām, Kur'ān, &c., that may be regarded as having attained a common, anglicized form; omitting, however, any mark to indicate that the two English letters kh, gh, &c., in such words as khalifah, al-Ghazzālī, &c., represent one Arabic letter, in order to avoid multiplying signs where the value of the letters will be sufficiently evident to those who are familiar with Arabic. In fact, all the diacritical marks will have meaning only for those who know the Arabic characters; and to them the system of transliteration used will be apparent without further explanation. For those who do not know the Arabic characters, the diacritical marks will add nothing; and it is hoped, on the other hand, that they will not unduly inconvenience the reader.

The author makes respectful and grateful acknowledgement of the debt which he owes to his honoured teacher, Martin Sprengling, Ph.D., Professor of Semitic Languages and Literatures at the University of Chicago, under whose tuition and direction this work was prepared. His wide acquaintance with the field of Arabic and Islāmics, his understanding of the critical questions which arise in connexion with such a study, his sympathetic guidance and painstaking assistance over a long period of study, made him an admirable counsellor and gave weight to his suggestions and advice. The writer therefore gladly acknowledges his great indebtedness to him, at the same time insisting that any defects which, it is feared, will be only too evident in this work, will be due only to the student and not to the teacher. To his colleagues in the School of Oriental Studies, the Rev. E. E. Elder, Ph.D., D.D., and the Rev. A. Jeffery, M.A., Ph.D., the author also expresses his hearty thanks for timely assistance in numerous ways during the preparation of this work and for encouragement and advice in connexion with its publication.

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INTRODUCTION

MUHAMMADAN modernism in Egypt may be said to have taken form as a definite movement during the last quarter of the preceding century, under the leadership of the late Grand Muftī of Egypt, Shaikh Muḥammad ‘Abduh, who died in 1905. It constitutes an attempt to free the religion of Islām from the shackles of a too rigid orthodoxy, and to accomplish reforms which will render it adaptable to the complex demands of modern life. Its prevailing character is that of religious reform; it is inspired and dominated chiefly by theological considerations. It differs in this respect from the reforms instituted by the Indian group of rationalist reformers, who aim primarily at a cultural movement, and the adjustment of Islām to the conditions of modern European civilization.¹ The fundamental assumption, however, that Islām is a world religion, suitable for all peoples, all times, and all cultural conditions, is common to both movements.²

The initial impulse to the reform movement in Egypt originated, not within Egypt itself, but from the teaching and influence of that noted exponent of Pan-Islāmism and advocate of a thorough-going reform in Islām, the Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, who spent the years 1871 to 1879 in Egypt. Muḥammad ‘Abduh was one of the many young Egyptian students who were profoundly influenced by the ideas of the magnetic Afghan savant; but it was Muḥammad ‘Abduh, who, more than any of the others, was to prove his spiritual and intellectual kinship to the great teacher. By his active participation in the political, social, and religious life of his country, by his writings, and most of all by his energetic practical reforms, he perpetuated the spirit and ideals of his master. He thus became the prophet of a new day for Egypt and for Islām. Not unjustly has he been called by a recent

¹ Cf. Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der islamischen Koranauslegung*, p. 320. In the chapter entitled ‘Der islamische Modernismus und seine Koranauslegung’, pp. 310-70, he discusses and compares the Indian and Egyptian schools of reform, and then at greater length deals with the movement in Egypt. For abbreviations of works referred to in coming pages, see Appendix on Bibliography.

² Ibid., p. 321.

biographer 'one of the creators of modern Egypt', and with no less justice 'one of the founders of modern Islām',¹ since his efforts to reconcile the fundamental ideas of Islām with the scientific ideas of the West have significance for Islām the world over.

The reform impulse thus developed in Egypt by Muḥammad 'Abduh has persisted until the present and has made itself felt in many directions. A considerable number of sympathetic spirits had associated themselves with him in his reform activities and continued to advocate his principles after his death. It does not appear that his avowed following was ever so numerous, or so assimilated and organized, as to constitute a school or party of reform in the strict sense of the word. Yet his ideas have received a wide and sympathetic hearing among the educated people of Egypt and other Muslim countries. They have been potent in many circles and have exerted a moulding influence, even where no allegiance to him has been admitted. His views have been germinative and his spirit contagious. During the past quarter of a century or more, a genuine awakening has been in process in Egypt, an awakening which has expressed itself in an intellectual and literary renaissance, in movements towards social reform and in political developments which have given evidence of a growing spirit of nationalism. This awakening, it is true, has not all been of Muḥammad 'Abduh's making; other influences than his have contributed to it. But it cannot be fully explained nor understood apart from him; and his share in it, alike in its origin and in the direction of its development, must be acknowledged to be great. The hopes of a general reform of the religion of Islām have not been realized to the extent which he desired and anticipated; yet, at the same time, the reform impulses and liberalizing tendencies which he set in motion have operated in directions which he also visualized, and are accomplishing much that may fairly be considered as part of his objective. There is much reason, therefore, for examining the position of men of advanced views and sympathies in Egypt to-day, to discover

¹ B. Michel et le Cheikh Moustapha 'Abdel Razik: *Cheikh Mohammed 'Abdou: Rissalat al Tawhid*, Paris, 1925, *Introd.*, p. xlii.

what relation their views may bear to those which he advocated.

The course of discussion in the present study follows the lines suggested by the foregoing considerations. The real character and purpose of the movement inaugurated by Muḥammad 'Abduh cannot be fully and correctly understood apart from his personality and his activities ; for his activities are the best commentary on his views. But these, in turn, can only be explained by a knowledge of the man who inspired them, the Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn. A brief account of the lives of these two men, master and pupil, has therefore been given, followed by a summary of the more important ideas of the latter as constituting the fundamental principles of Egyptian modernism. It has then seemed in place to pass in review the work of the principal associates and successors of Muḥammad 'Abduh, and thereafter, that of certain other advanced Egyptian thinkers who may possibly owe the inception of their views to him, in order to attempt to evaluate their contribution to modern Islāmic thought. Of these latter writers, the work of 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq on the Muslim Caliphate, published in 1925 under the title *Al-Islām wa Uṣūl al-Hukm* ('Islām and the Fundamentals of Authority') has been given somewhat particular attention, with a view to noting the significance of the author's principal contentions. The works of other Egyptian writers and thinkers of to-day deserve to be considered, were it the intention to review the whole field of modern Arabic literary activity ; but it is manifestly not possible, within the limits of a work like the present, to give such an extensive review, nor to include all that might reasonably be considered under the head of modernism in Egypt. It has, therefore, been thought sufficient, for the purpose in hand, to present what may be regarded as typical of a much wider field, and thus indicate, in summary form, the trend of Islāmic thought in Egypt to-day.

CHAPTER

AL-SAYYID JAMĀL AL-DĪN AL-AFGHĀNĪ

THE Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn, the chief agent in the inception of the modern movement in Egypt, was born in the year 1839 at As'ad-Ābād, near Kābul in Afghanistan.¹ His father was Al-Sayyid Ṣafdar,² who, though himself poor and illiterate, claimed descent from the noted scholar and traditionalist of Islām, Al-Sayyid 'Alī Al-Tirmidhī,³ and traced his family connexion back to Al-Ḥusain (ibn 'Alī ibn Abi Ṭālib), the grandson of Muḥammad the Prophet. From his fifth to his tenth year, Jamāl studied in the local school. From his tenth year onward he pursued his studies in different parts of Persia and Afghanistan. By the time he was eighteen he had studied practically the whole range of Muslim sciences and acquired a remarkable familiarity with all: Arabic grammar, philology and rhetoric in all branches, Muslim history, Muslim theology in all its branches, Ṣūfism, logic, philosophy, physics, metaphysics, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, anatomy, and various other subjects. When eighteen years of age he went to India, where he stayed for about a year and a half, adding

¹ This is according to his own account. According to the Persian account, he was born in a village of the same name near Hamadān in Persia. Why he should have chosen to represent himself as an Afghan, if he were really born in Persia, can only be a matter of conjecture, since information concerning his early life is scanty, being confined chiefly to that which he himself has furnished. Fortunately there is sufficient material for knowledge of his later life, beginning with the time of his sojourn in Egypt. Prof. E. G. Browne, his chief biographer, conjectures (*Persian Revolution*, pp. 3, 4) that he wished to be known as an Afghan, rather than a Persian, partly that he might the more readily pass as an orthodox Sunnī Muslim, and partly that he might withdraw himself from the dubious 'protection' of the Persian Government, which he regarded as a poor guarantee of safety. Whatever the truth in regard to his birth-place, he became known as 'al-Afghānī', that is to say, 'the Afghan'. W. S. Blunt in his Diary, date of September 14, 1883 (quoted *Pers. Rev.*, p. 402, note), states that Jamāl's family is Arabian and 'they have always preserved in it the tradition of the Arabic language which he speaks with great perfection'. Somewhat against this, is the statement of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (*Al-Manār*, viii (1905), 389) that Jamāl, with all his eloquence, never entirely got rid of traces of his Persian extraction in his use of Arabic.

² Or Ṣaftar, as given in the Arabic accounts. Cf. *Tārīkh*, i. 27.

³ Died A.H. 279, A.D. 892.

to his store of learning some acquaintance with the European sciences and their methods, together with some knowledge of English. He already knew Afghan, Persian, Turkish, and Arabic. He concluded his stay in India by making a leisurely pilgrimage to Mecca, arriving there in 1857.

After completing the pilgrimage, Jamāl returned to Afghanistān, and entered the service of the ruling Amīr, Dust Muḥammad Khān, whom he accompanied in the siege and capture of Harāt, which was occupied by the Amīr's cousin and son-in-law, Sulṭān Aḥmad Shāh. In 1864 Muḥammad Khān died and was succeeded by Shīr 'Alī. In the civil war between him and his three brothers which followed his accession, Jamāl attached himself to Muḥammad A'ẓam, one of the three brothers, who after varying fortunes in the prolonged civil war eventually became Amīr and advanced Jamāl to the position of Prime Minister. Jamāl at that time was twenty-seven years of age. The civil war was soon renewed and the rival Amīr, Shīr 'Alī, supported by the English and English money, finally succeeded in vanquishing his brother Muḥammad A'ẓam and causing him to flee the country. A short time thereafter Muḥammad A'ẓam died.

The new Amīr did not take action openly against Jamāl al-Dīn because of the combined circumstance of the latter's being a Sayyid and having influence with the people, but secretly he sought to harm him. Jamāl accordingly, deeming it wise to leave the country, asked and secured permission to make another pilgrimage to Mecca, and left Afghanistān in the year 1869. Proceeding by way of India, he was received with honour by the Indian Government but was not permitted to engage in any political activity nor to hold conferences with the Muslim leaders. After a month, therefore, he proceeded on his way, being conveyed in one of the Government's ships to Suez. From there he went to Cairo for a brief visit of forty days' duration. During this time he frequented the Azhar University, holding converse with many teachers and students, and delivered lectures in his lodgings to those who came to him.

Meantime, he had changed his intention of continuing to Mecca on pilgrimage and went instead to Constantinople,

where he was received with unusual honours by the Sultān 'Abd al-Ḥamīd and the leading officials and scholars. As was his wont, he at once entered zealously into the life of the circles into which he had been received, losing no opportunity to make known his views, and soon had acquired great influence. But in so doing he aroused the distrust and jealousy of the Shaikh al-Islām. Towards the close of the following year, 1870, he was invited by the Director of the Dār al-Funūn, or the Turkish University, to address the students on the importance of the crafts and trades.¹ Although Jamāl had taken the precaution of having his lecture approved beforehand by a number of high officials, the Shaikh al-Islām seized upon some of the expressions which he used and accused him of employing terms derogatory to the dignity of Islām. The public Press took up the matter, Jamāl replied, and such a *furor* was created that, for the sake of peace, the Turkish Government ordered Jamāl to leave the country. He accordingly returned to Egypt, arriving in Cairo, March 22, 1871.

It was his intention to stay but a short time in Egypt. But through the influence of Riāḍ Pasha, then Prime Minister, the Egyptian Government conferred upon him a monthly allowance of ten Egyptian pounds as a mark of respect and recognition.² He therefore decided to settle in Egypt for the present. When the news of his arrival became known, he was besieged in his lodgings by eager students to whom he expounded some of the most advanced text-books on theology, philosophy, jurisprudence, astronomy, and mysticism. With

¹ Cf. J. Zaidān, *Mashāhīr al-shark* ('Eastern Celebrities'), ii. 55. Also Browne, *Pers. Rev.*, p. 6, for summary of address. He compared the body politic to a living organism of which the limbs were the different crafts and professions. The soul of this body is either the prophetic or philosophic faculty. Seizing upon these words, the Shaikh al-Islām accused Jamāl of calling the prophetic office an art or craft and the prophet a craftsman, an idea which, he charged, detracted from the unique dignity of the prophet as the divinely inspired messenger of God. The real animus which inspired the charges, however liberal the views of Jamāl may have seemed to the conservative shaikhs, was doubtless jealousy of Jamāl's influence. Zaidān (op. cit.) says that proposals made by Jamāl concerning methods for making education more general gained the ill will of the Shaikh al-Islām, since they touched upon his income.

² *Mashāhīr*, ii. 56: 'not for any specific services but to do honour to an illustrious visitor'.

a view to raising up a generation of young writers who could ably set forth in print the new ideas which he was imparting, he trained the more promising of his pupils in the art of writing for the Press. He also took an active interest in Egyptian political affairs. He did all he could to arouse the country to the dangers of foreign intervention and control, and his writing for the press did not conceal his anti-English sympathies.

These activities continued for the space of about eight years. It was inevitable that he should arouse opposition. The conservative theologians distrusted his advanced views of learning, particularly his revival of the study of philosophy, which in conservative circles has always been regarded as the enemy of true religion.¹ His political activities aroused the suspicions of the Government, and, especially, of the British officials in Egypt. During the years of Jamāl's sojourn in Egypt the financial affairs of the country had been rapidly sinking into that condition of hopeless bankruptcy which led to European intervention, and, finally, to the deposition of Ismā'il Pasha, the Khedive, whose ill-considered and extravagant efforts to Europeanize the country had ended so disastrously. He was succeeded on June 25, 1879, by Tawfiq Pasha, son of Ismā'il, who came into power as a young reformer of whom great things were expected by the liberal element which, by this time, under the inspiring leadership of Jamāl, had acquired an influence to be reckoned with. Tawfiq Pasha, it seems, had given assurances to Jamāl and his group before he came to the throne that, when he had attained to power, he would aid their efforts at reform. But he had scarcely taken his seat as Khedive when, in September, 1879, he expelled Jamāl al-Dīn from Egypt along with his faithful Persian disciple, Abū Turāb.²

¹ Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā has pointed out (*Al-Manār*, ii. (1899), 245), that three principal charges were directed against Jamāl in Egypt by the conservative Shaikh class: his knowledge of philosophy, his refusal to be bound by certain religious customs which had become, in the eyes of the people, a part of religion, and the fact that many of his followers paid no attention to religion. To this latter accusation Rashīd Riḍā replies, that this is the fault of their previous training and not of their association with Jamāl al-Dīn.

² Two explanations have been advanced for this unexpected action of Tawfiq Pasha. The one proposed by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (*Al-Manār*,

After his expulsion from Egypt, Jamāl went again to India and took up his abode at Hyderabad in the Deccan. Here he composed in Persian the only lengthy work which has survived of which he was the author,¹ the *Refutation of the Materialists*, a defence of Islām against modern derogatory attacks. In the year 1882, the 'Young Egyptian Movement', with which Jamāl had been so prominently identified, culminated in the 'Arābī Rebellion and the subsequent occupation of Egypt by Great Britain. During the progress of hostilities, Jamāl was detained by the Indian Government in Calcutta under surveillance, but on the collapse of the Egyptian Nationalist movement he was permitted to leave India. He went to London, remained a few days, and then went to Paris, where he stayed three years.²

Upon his arrival in Paris, he entered upon a period of active international propaganda. His political views,

viii. 404) is that as soon as Tawfīk Pasha succeeded to the seat vacated by his father, Jamāl and his party began to press for the fulfilment of his earlier promises, especially for the formation of a representative assembly, which was the keystone of all the reforms which they hoped to introduce. But promises are notoriously easier to make before the assumption of office than to fulfil afterward. Tawfīk Pasha apparently, therefore, found it more convenient to get rid of the troublesome reformer than to fulfil his promises. The other view, that of E. G. Browne (*Pers. Rev.*, p. 8), is that the British Government, suspicious of the political activities of Jamāl, brought pressure to bear upon the young Khedive in the difficult situation in which he found himself, and induced him to rid the country of the dangerous agitator. The two views may well supplement each other. Cf. *Risālah*, p. xxix; *Secret History of Egypt* (1922), pp. 95, 96. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā in *Tārīkh*, i. 76, writing with greater freedom than was possible in 1905, confirms the second view. He states that France and Great Britain united in their representations to the Khedive against any change in favour of a popular form of government.

¹ S. G. Wilson, *Modern Movements among Moslems*, states (p. 71) that a book by Jamāl on the Caliphate was suppressed.

² It has been stated, e.g. by Wilson, *Modern Movements*, p. 72, that Jamāl al-Dīn at this time made a journey to America with the purpose of becoming a naturalized citizen, but did not remain. He does seem to have had this intention, but it is doubtful if he ever fulfilled it. Prof. Browne, a personal friend of Jamāl, makes no allusion in his biographical account to a visit to America. W. S. Blunt, also a personal friend of Jamāl, says, *Secret History of Egypt*, p. 120: 'I had also vainly tried to discover Jamāl's whereabouts in America where, after wandering two years in India, he was said to be'. Michel, *Risālah*, Introd., p. xxii, says: 'His unedited correspondence which we have had occasion to examine shows us that he could not have made this voyage.'

published in the French Press (for by this time he had learned some French), were widely read and received the closest attention of those European governments which had political interests in Muslim countries, especially Great Britain. During the year 1883 he carried on a controversy with Ernest Renan in the columns of *Le Journal des Débats* on the subject 'Islām and Science', the discussion centring about the ability of Islām to reform and adapt itself to modern civilization. In 1884 he was joined, at his own invitation, by his friend and former pupil, Muḥammad 'Abduh, who had been exiled from Egypt for complicity in the 'Arābī uprising. Together they began the publication of an Arabic weekly newspaper called *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah* (called in French *Le Lien Indissoluble*), 'The Indissoluble Bond', with the object of arousing the Muslim peoples to the need of uniting their forces against Western aggression and exploitation. Jamāl, as political director of the paper, determined its aggressive and strongly anti-English tone, but Muḥammad 'Abduh, as literary editor, wrote all the articles which appeared in it.¹ The first number appeared on the fifth of Jamādī I, 1301, which corresponds to March 13, 1884.² Only eighteen numbers were issued, the last number appearing October 16, 1884.³ Great Britain excluded the paper from India and Egypt, the two countries chiefly to be influenced by its publication, and took repressive measures also against those who received copies of it.⁴ But, in spite of its brief existence, the paper exerted a very great influence throughout the Muslim world, in stirring into consciousness the national spirit of decadent Muslim nations.⁵

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 229; also *Al-Manār*, viii. 455; Michel, *Introd.*, p. xxxv.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 229. ³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 462; *Tārīkh*, i. 380.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 462; *Mashāhīr*, ii. 57.

⁵ Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā is of the opinion (*Al-Manār*, viii. 455) that, had the paper been continued, it would have occasioned a general Muslim uprising. This paper was the organ of a secret organization bearing the same name, founded by Jamāl, composed of Muslims of India, Egypt, North Africa, and Syria, the purpose of which was 'to unite Muslims and arouse them from their sleep and acquaint them with the dangers threatening them and guide them to the way of meeting these dangers'. (*Al-Manār*, viii. 455; *Tārīkh*, i. 283, 306.) The immediate aim of the organization was to free Egypt and the Sudan from the British occupation. Jamāl also originated in Mecca a Pan-Islāmic society called 'Umm al-Ḳurah', with the object

Upon the collapse of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, Jamāl, after having made a brief visit to London to discuss with British politicians the affairs of the Mahdī uprising in the Sudan,¹ went to Moscow and later St. Petersburg. In both places he was given a very cordial reception. Here, again, his newspaper articles on the political affairs of Afghanistan, Persia, Turkey, and England created a deep impression in political circles. His stay in Russia extended over four years.²

In 1889 while in Munich on a confidential mission for the Shāh of Persia, he met the Shāh, Nāsir al-Dīn, then on a visit to Europe. The Shāh persuaded him to accompany him to Persia and become Prime Minister. According to one account³ this was the second time that Jamāl had acted as a minister in the Shāh's Cabinet. In 1886, this account states, he was invited by cable from the Shāh to come to Persia, had acceded to the summons and been accorded an honourable reception

of creating one Caliph over the whole Muslim world. This society, however, was suppressed by the Sultān 'Abd al-Ḥamīd within a year of its being founded. *Pers. Rev.*, p. 15; *Modern Movements*, p. 72. As evidence that the authority of *Al-'Urwah* continues, even to the present day, Goldziher (art., *Enc. Islām*) cites the fact that a new edition of the articles which it contained was published in 1910. A still later edition has been published in 1928. As further evidence, it is related in *Al-Manār*, xxii (1921), 525 sqq., that, when an article was published in one of the daily newspapers, over the signature of one of the leading 'Ulamā of Egypt, it was recognized by numbers of the people, even in the villages, as one of Muḥammad 'Abduh's articles which originally appeared in *Al-'Urwah*.

¹ This was in 1885. Cf. *Pers. Rev.*, pp. 402, 403; *Mashāhīr*, ii. 57; *Al Manār*, viii. 457. In the latter, the decision of the British Foreign Minister to abandon the idea of the reconquest of the Sudan was due to the representations of Jamāl and Muḥammad 'Abduh. According to W. S. Blunt (quoted *Pers. Rev.*, p. 403), Jamāl came to England to discuss the possibility of coming to terms with the Mahdī. According to the same source, it was at one time arranged that Jamāl should accompany a special British Mission to Constantinople that he might exert his influence with the court of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd in favour of a settlement which should include England's evacuation of Egypt and an English alliance against Russia with Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan. But at the last moment it was decided that he should not go, although his tickets had already been secured. Jamāl, highly incensed, left in a dudgeon for Moscow and threw himself in with those who advocated a Russo-Turkish alliance against England.

² But see next paragraph. If two visits to Persia are accepted, the stay in Russia will be separated into two periods by the first visit to Persia, which intervened.

³ *Mashāhīr*, ii. 57. It is to be noted that the account given in *Tārīkh*, i. 54, makes no mention of a second visit to Persia.

and made Minister of War. His conspicuous learning and eloquence, united with his manifest zeal for the welfare of the country, won for him unusual influence, not only with the learned and official classes but also with the common people. The Shāh began to be suspicious, fearing that Jamāl would employ this influence to undermine the Shāh's position. Jamāl, becoming aware of this change of attitude in the Shāh, asked permission to take a 'change of air' out of the country, and went to Russia. When, in 1889, he returned a second time to Persia by the Shāh's urgent invitation, he was again received by the people as their leader and spokesman in their hopes for the betterment of the deplorable conditions of Persia. For some time all went well between the Shāh and his Prime Minister. But the former's suspicions again got the better of him. Jamāl again asked permission to leave the country but was refused with discourtesy. He then took refuge in the shrine of the Mosque of Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīm, where he remained for about seven months. He now broke with the Shāh, openly denouncing him and advocating his deposition. His influence with all classes of the people grew. Among his disciples were twelve who were later prominent in connexion with the Persian 'Risorgimento' or nationalist revolution. One of these disciples assassinated the Shāh on May 1, 1896.¹

The Shāh finally violated the sanctuary of the mosque and had Jamāl arrested, although on a sick-bed at the time, and conveyed to the Turkish frontier. The date of this expulsion is uncertain, but it was about the close of 1890 or the beginning of 1891.² Jamāl remained in Basra until his health was

¹ The assassin, Mirza Riza of Kirmān, on cross-examination confessed that only Jamāl was privy to his plan to kill the Shāh, cf. *Pers. Rev.*, p. 67. Jamāl, while in London and also while in Constantinople, had savagely attacked the Shāh in print and in public addresses. When the Shāh was shot, the Persian Government demanded the extradition of Jamāl along with three others who were suspected of complicity in the plot, but the Sultān refused to give up Jamāl. The other three were returned and secretly put to death in Tabriz (*Pers. Rev.*, p. 11).

² *Pers. Rev.*, p. 11: Jamāl states, quoted *Tārīkh*, i. 55, that the plan of taking refuge in the shrine was a 'stratagem' on his part, since any one who took refuge in the sanctuary was regarded as free from molestation. He further states that, after seven months, he 'went out' from the shrine, apparently of his own will, although the expression is not decisive and allows the fuller statement as given above.

recovered and then made his way to London, returning in 1892 to Constantinople where he remained until his death. Although he was accorded high honours by the Sultān 'Abd al-Ḥamīd and lived in enjoyment of the Sultān's bounty, nevertheless he was, in reality, being kept in 'gilded captivity'.¹ His death occurred on March 9, 1897, as a result of cancer of the jaw which soon spread to the neck.² He was buried with great public acclaim in the 'Shaikhs' Cemetery' in Constantinople.

The activities of this remarkable man thus encompassed practically all of the lands of Islām and also those European countries the governments of which are involved in the affairs of Muḥammadan peoples. Afghanistan, Persia, Turkey, Egypt, India, all, at one time or another, experienced his potent contact and were affected by it. The Persian Revolution, which had its beginnings in the agitation against the Tobacco Monopoly in 1891 and culminated with the inauguration of the Constitution on August 5, 1906, was inspired and sustained in its earlier stages by his advice and encouragement.³ The successful Young Turk movement of 1908 was being prepared for by his agitation during the years he spent in Constantinople. In the Egyptian Nationalist movement which, in its earlier phase, terminated so ingloriously in the failure of the 'Arābī uprising, he was the prime mover, and to

¹ *Risālah*, p. xxii.

² More than a suspicion was entertained by the Persian friends of Jamāl that the disease which caused his death, although superficially resembling cancer, was in reality the result of inoculation of the lip by means of a poisoned tooth-pick. This is denied by most Turks (*Pers. Rev.*, pp. 12, 96). Also a biographical note in the introduction to *Al-Ḳaḍā wa al-Ḳadar*, a brief treatise on the Divine Decrees and Predestination by Jamāl, where the charge of foul dealing is definitely made.

³ It was a letter of Jamāl's which stirred Ḥajjī Mirzā Ḥasan-i-Shīrāzi, one of the chief Mujtahids of Persia, to issue his *fatwā* declaring the use and cultivation of tobacco unlawful so long as the Concession continued. The people followed his leadership by boycotting tobacco until finally the Government, aroused by the resentment of the people, rescinded the hated Concession. The ultimate results of this alliance between the clergy and the people were seen in the assassination of the Shāh and the Prime Minister, and finally in the granting of a constitution. Cf. translation of the letter to the Mujtahid, and of two articles by Jamāl on the condition of Persia, from the Arabic periodical *Ziya al-Khafiḡayn*, in *Per. Rev.*, pp. 15 sqq. The whole book is a full and admirable account of the revolution from its beginnings. Cf. also summary of events in *Modern Movements*, pp. 242-8.

no less a degree in the intellectual and religious awakening represented by Muḥammad 'Abduh, as will be shown later. 'Wherever he went', says Michel in his biography of Shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh, 'he left behind him a hot-bed of contention, and it can be said without exaggeration, that all the movements of national emancipation, of reaction against European enterprise, which we have been witnessing in the Orient for a score of years, have their origin directly in his propaganda.'¹

The chief aim of Jamāl al-Dīn in all his untiring efforts and ceaseless agitation, was the accomplishment of the unification of all Muslim peoples under one Islāmic government, over which the one Supreme Caliph should bear undisputed rule, as in the glorious days of Islām before its power had been dissipated in endless dissensions and divisions, and the Muslim lands had lapsed into ignorance and helplessness, to become the prey of Western aggression.² The present decadent condition of Muslim countries weighed heavily upon him. He believed that if these countries were once freed from the incubus of foreign domination or interference, and Islām itself reformed and adapted to the demands of present-day conditions, the Muslim peoples would be able to work out for themselves a new and glorious order of affairs, without dependence on, or imitation of, European nations.³ To him, the religion of Islām was, in all essentials, a world religion and thoroughly capable, by reason of its inner spiritual force, of adaptation to the changing conditions of every age.

It was characteristic of the man's temperament that the means which he chose for the realization of his aims should be that of political revolution. This seemed to him the quick and sure way of securing for Islāmic peoples the freedom

¹ *Risālah*, p. xxiii.

² *Mashāhīr*, ii. 61; *Modern Movements*, p. 72; *Pers. Rev.*, pp. 14, 15. Muḥammad Rashīd Ridā, in *Tārīkh*, i. 73, takes occasion to correct the statement of *Mashāhīr* that Jamāl was supremely devoted to the Ottoman Caliphate. His objective was to raise up some Muslim power that would become a rallying point for all Muslim nations. He began with Egypt; when his plans failed there, he pinned his hopes on the Mahdī uprising in the Sudan; then he tried Persia, and finally, the Ottoman Empire. See also Muḥammad 'Abduh's account of Jamāl's aims, *Tārīkh*, i. 34.

³ Cf. *Koranauslegung*, p. 321; *Risālah*, pp. xxiii, xxx.

necessary to enable them to set their own house in order. The way of gradual reform and education was too long and uncertain for him ; he wished to see results in his own lifetime.¹ Therefore, he agitated for the overthrow of the existing order. The deposition or even the assassination of Muḥammadan rulers who, by encouraging or acquiescing in European encroachment, hindered them from working out their own salvation in their own way, was a legitimate means to the desired end.²

But with all his radical aims and methods, there is a constructive phase to his activities which should not be overlooked. He was animated by a genuine desire for the regeneration of Islām and an ardent faith in the possibility of its regeneration which was contagious.³ His efforts for the union of Sunnīs and Shī'ahs by mutual concessions and adjustments,⁴ while primarily political in significance, are indicative of the spirit of religious tolerance which he conceived to be necessary for the healing of age-long divisions in the Muslim world. His prodigious learning in all fields of Muslim lore won for him the respect and homage of learned men in all the Muḥammadan lands in which he sojourned and attracted to him groups of eager disciples to whom he imparted his methods of reconciling the historic theological and philosophical positions of Islām with the attainments of modern scientific thought.

It was because of the intransigent attitude of the shaiikh class in Egypt, as Muḥammad Rashīd Ridā remarks,⁵ that

¹ Cf. *Al-Manār*, viii. 400, *Risālah*, p. xxiii.

² Jamāl once said, in an interview with Prof. Browne: 'No reforms can be hoped for till six or seven heads are cut off', and he specified by name the Shāh of Persia and his Prime Minister, both of whom were afterwards assassinated (*Pers. Rev.*, p. 45, cf. also p. 28). W. S. Blunt in his *Secret History of Egypt*, p. 95, also p. 101, says that in the spring of 1879 it was much discussed, among the group of reformers influenced by Jamāl, how and by what means the Khedive Ismā'il might be deposed, or, if there were no other way, even assassinated. And again, p. 489, quoted Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, ii. 181, footnote, he mentions a statement of Muḥammad 'Abduh's that a more definite plan of assassination had been talked over, but did not mature for lack of a suitable person to take the lead in it.

³ Cf. *Pers. Rev.*, p. 29; Michel, *Risālah*, Introd., p. xxiii.

⁴ Cf. *Pers. Rev.*, p. 30; *Modern Movements*, p. 72.

⁵ *Al-Manār*, ii. (1899), 246.

the number of those interested in the religious sciences who attached themselves to Jamāl was small; and therefore the literary revival appeared among the 'effendi' or Europeanized class. And for the same reason, although Jamāl paid much attention to educational and religious reform, those who were inspired by him to attempt to bring about such reforms were few. It can be readily understood that the radical political appeal of Jamāl should find a ready response among young patriots to whom the field of political agitation offered not only an apparently quick and easy method of attaining national independence, but also provided opportunity for the expression of vociferous, if not always deeply pondered, nationalistic sentiments; while the more sober and fundamental reforms which he also advocated should find few champions. That the more constructive ideas were also fundamental in his teaching is demonstrated in the life and work of Muḥammad 'Abduh, the one of his disciples who most deeply imbibed of his spirit.

An example of the more constructive side of his teaching is given at the close of his book, *Refutation of the Materialists*, in a section entitled, 'The means by which the happiness of nations may be attained.'¹ This brief statement contains many of his fundamental ideas, all of which may be found reproduced in the teaching of Muḥammad 'Abduh. Because it is of some importance in this double connexion, it is given here in summary. It is necessary, he says, in order that the happiness of nations may be attained:

1. That the minds of the people should be purified of belief in superstitions and foolish notions.

Islām requires this, especially because the doctrine of the Unity of God requires the clarifying of the mind and forbids such foolish and extravagant notions as idolatry, or incarnations and suffering of the deity.

2. That the people should feel themselves capable of attaining the highest levels of nobility of character and should be desirous of doing so. The only thing which cannot be reached by him who desires it is prophecy, which God confers on whomsoever He will.

¹ *Al-radd 'alā al-dahriyyīn*, translated from the Persian into the Arabic by Shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh, Al-Rahmaniyyah Press, Cairo, 1925, pp. 82-90.

If all the people were persuaded of the possibility of attaining perfection of character they would vie with one another in endeavours to attain it.

Islām made possible perfection for all. It is not like Brahmanism which divides men into castes, the limits of which cannot be overstepped. Nor like Judaism, which despised men of other religions and instituted within itself the priesthood as the caste nearest God, without the mediation of which no one could attain nearness to God.

3. That the articles of belief of the religion of the nation should be the first subject taught to the people, and this should be done by teaching also the proper reasons and arguments in support of these beliefs, that the religious beliefs of the people should not rest upon mere acceptance of authoritative teaching (*tak-lid*). Guizot, in his work on 'Civilization', shows that the most potent element in the modern progress and civilization of Europe was the appearance of a religious party that claimed the right of investigating the sources of religious belief for themselves, and demanding proof for these beliefs.

Islām is almost alone among the religions of the world in addressing itself to man's reason, and demanding that he should accept religious belief only upon the grounds of convincing argument and not of mere claim and supposition. Contrasted with Islām are other religions, such as those which require the belief that one can be more than one and the many can be one, a belief which its professors justify on the ground that it is above reason and cannot be grasped by reason.

4. That in every nation there should be a special class whose function would be the education of the rest of the people, and another class whose function would be the training of the people in morals. One class would combat natural ignorance and the need of instruction, the other would combat the natural passions and the need of discipline. These two provisions, the teacher to perform the work of instruction, and the disciplinarian to command that which is good and to prohibit that which should be avoided, are among the most important provisions of Islām.

Islām is thus the only religion by which the happiness of nations can be attained.

If it be objected, 'Why then are the Muslims in the evil state in which we find them?', the answer may be given in the words of the *Qur'ān*: 'Verily God will not change the state of a people until they change their own state' (*Qur'ān*, 13. 12).

The character and influence of Jamāl al-Dīn have been finely epitomized in brief statements by two of his biographers, one a Western scholar and writer, the other an Eastern. Professor E. G. Browne says of him, that he was a man of 'enormous force of character, prodigious learning, untiring activity, dauntless courage, extraordinary eloquence both in speech and in writing, and an appearance equally striking and majestic. He was at once philosopher, writer, orator, and journalist, but above all, politician, and was regarded by his admirers as a great patriot and by his antagonists as a dangerous agitator'.¹

The other estimate is by Jirjī Zaidān, his Syrian biographer, in his biographical accounts of *Eastern Celebrities*. After saying that the goal of all Jamāl's efforts was the unification of Islām, he continues: 'In this endeavour he expended all his powers and for the sake of it he cut himself off from the world; for he never took a wife nor did he seek any gain. But for all that, he did not attain what he desired and laboured for; and he left no record of his ideas except the treatise against the materialists, and various treatises on different subjects already mentioned. Yet he instilled into the souls of his friends and disciples a living spirit which aroused their energies and sharpened their pens, and the East has profited and shall profit by their deeds.'²

¹ *Pers. Rev.*, pp. 2, 3.

² *Mashāhīr*, ii. 61.

CHAPTER II

MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH: BIOGRAPHY

1849-77: Preparation.

WHEN Jamāl al-Dīn was bidding farewell to some of his Egyptian friends and followers at Suez in 1879, as he was leaving Egypt for the last time, he is reported to have said to them: 'I leave you Shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh, and he is sufficient for Egypt as a scholar.'¹ Muḥammad 'Abduh was at this time about thirty years of age. For about eight years he had been under the influence of Jamāl al-Dīn. He had already entered upon his work of teaching, had published his first two works, and was a frequent contributor to the newspapers on subjects of public interest. He had shown in a marked degree both capacity and inclination, not only for scholarship but also for the work of public reform. He was Jamāl's ablest pupil and the one closest to him and most sympathetic towards his views. It was only natural, therefore, that when Jamāl had to relinquish, by force of circumstances, the work which he had begun in Egypt, he should look to Muḥammad 'Abduh to carry it on to completion. And in leaving such a successor, he bequeathed to Egypt and to Islām a legacy, the full 'sufficiency' of which even he could not have foreseen.

Thus the stream of Egyptian reformation, though taking its rise, like the Nile, from a source beyond the confines of the country, was destined to attain its full flood through Egyptian channels. For Muḥammad 'Abduh was a pure Egyptian; he came from a family belonging to the 'fallāḥ' or peasant class of the Egyptian Delta.² True, his father 'Abduh ibn Ḥasan Khair Allāh, came from a family of Turkish origin that had settled in the village of Maḥallat Naṣr in the Buḥairah Province at some remote time in the past,³ and his mother came from a village near Ṭanṭā in the Gharbiyyah Province, of a large family related originally to the family of Banī 'Adī, that of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb the second Caliph, to whose

¹ *Mashāḥir*, i. 281.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 379; *Tārīkh*, i. 13.

³ Cf. *Risālah*, p. ix.

line of descent the mother was reputed to belong.¹ But both families had so long been settled on the soil of Egypt that they partook completely of the characteristics and manner of life of the Egyptian peasant class.

Birth and Early Years. 1849-65.

The exact birthplace of Muḥammad 'Abduh is unknown, nor is the year of his birth entirely certain. The year 1849 (A.H. 1266) is the date most commonly accepted;² he himself gives this date in his writings, although he also mentions a year earlier;³ but other dates are given by others, even as early as 1842.⁴ Towards the close of the reign of Muḥammad 'Alī Pasha (1805-49) the father of Muḥammad 'Abduh had to flee from his village in order to escape the oppression of officials of his own province. He came to the Gharbiyyah Province and during the next few years made his home in a number of villages in succession. It was during this unsettled period that he married the mother of Muḥammad and that Muḥammad was born. Some few years later, while Muḥammad was still a child, he returned, with his family, to Maḥallat Naṣr, where he had acquired some land.

Here 'Abduh grew up, after the manner of life common to lads in the small villages of Egypt. He developed a sturdy constitution and became proficient in swimming, horsemanship,

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii (1905), 379.

² Cf. *Risālah*, p. ix; *Koranauslegung*, p. 321; M. Horten, 'Muḥammad Abduh, sein Leben und seine theologisch-philosophische Gedankenwelt', in *Beiträge zur Kenntniss des Orients*, xiii (1915), 85.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 390. 'Abduh's own account in *Tārīkh*, i. 16 gives A.H. 1265.

⁴ Great confusion on this point appears in the accounts of newspapers and magazines of the date of Muḥammad 'Abduh's death which are reproduced in *Tārīkh*, vol. iii. His age is variously given as 60 (p. 41), 62 (p. 38), 65 (p. 80). The date of his birth is given as A.H. 1258 (A.D. 1842) by the magazine *Al-Diyā*, edited by Shaikh Ibrāhīm al-Yāziji, and by *Al-Hilāl*, edited by Jurjī Zaidān (cf. same account in *Mashāhīr*, i. 281-7), vide *Tārīkh*, iii. 95, 110. The same date also is given, pp. 100, 136, 191. Other dates are 1843, p. 148, and 1845, pp. 19, 131. The date given by *Al-Manār* (cf. above), 1266-1849, is given also by Ḥasan Pasha 'Āṣim, a friend and supporter of Muḥammad 'Abduh, in the biographical account recited at the memorial service, *Tārīkh*, iii. 237. Cf. also pp. 33, 124. This is evidently the date accepted by the friends and followers of Muḥammad 'Abduh.

and the use of firearms,¹ and acquired a love of an active outdoor life which he retained to old age. Many of the characteristics which he displayed in later life reflected the best features of the patriarchal village life and customs, particularly his reserved and dignified and always courteous bearing;² while his sympathetic understanding of the needs of the great mass of the people and his passionate desire for the uplift of the whole nation, are the outgrowth of his early peasant life, when he listened to the frequent tales of the days of Muḥammad 'Alī Pasha, then still recent in the memory of his elders. For, as has always been the case in Egypt from time immemorial, however brilliant the outward aspects of the reign of the ruling sovereign may have been, a burden of grinding hardship fell upon the common people.³

His parents seem to have been persons of worthy character, although entirely uneducated, as are the great majority of the middle and lower classes of Egypt even until the present day. Muḥammad 'Abduh, in his autobiography, which, unfortunately, he never completed, speaks of his father in terms of much respect, and indicates that he was held in much esteem in his own village.⁴ The father seems at this time to have acquired enough ease of circumstances to provide for a teacher to come to the house to teach reading and writing to the youngest of his sons, for whom he was desirous of securing opportunities of education that had been denied to his other children. But his position was probably little above that of the villager who possesses a little land.⁵

When ten years of age, the young Muḥammad, after having learned reading and writing, was sent to the home of a 'ḥāfīz', or professional reciter of the Qur'ān, that he might learn to recite the Qur'ān from memory. This task he accomplished in two years, which was regarded as an unusual performance and much to the credit of the teacher. This was the first step

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 396.

² *Ibid.*, p. 541.

³ Muḥammad 'Abduh's father, as noted above, himself suffered from the oppression of those days.

⁴ Cf. *Risālah*, pp. x, xi; *Tārīkh*, i. 13.

⁵ Cf. the biographical sketch reproduced in *Tārīkh*, iii. 19 sqq., where the poverty of the parents is said to have been so extreme that their house had no door. This is represented as the result of their great generosity. But both statements may be extreme, since generosity is a much lauded virtue.

in the only type of education which was then open to lads of families in the social position of Muḥammad 'Abduh's parents; if he carried his studies far enough, he could in time become an 'Ālim', or 'shaikh', a man educated in the various branches of Muslim theology; or he could become a 'faḥīh', a man trained in the interpretation and application of the multitudinous and perplexing details of the Shari'ah, or Divine Law of Islām. The few schools conducted by the Government at this time, which were modelled along European lines, were open only to sons of officials.

The foundation of his education having been thus laid, the youthful Muḥammad, then about thirteen years of age, was in 1862, sent to the school of the Aḥmadi Mosque¹ in Ṭanṭā, that he might perfect the memorizing of the Qur'ān, and particularly learn to recite or intone it according to the strictly determined rules of the art, which is an important part of a theological education. An older stepbrother of Muḥammad was a teacher in this school, with some reputation for the excellence of his Qur'ān intonation.² After about two years spent in this study, he was initiated into the mysteries of Arabic grammar. But it was an unfortunate beginning which the young would-be neophyte made in his first attempt to master the science of the Arabic language. He was required, according to the regular methods of instruction, to learn by memory the text of an Arabic grammar, together with the comment on this text of some reputed master of the subject.³ 'I spent a year and a half', he says in his autobiography, referring to this period of study, 'without understanding a

¹ The larger schools of religious foundation conducted in the precincts of, or in connexion with, the larger mosques, were at this time, besides the celebrated 'University' of Al-Azhar in Cairo, which enjoyed undoubted primacy not only in Egypt but also throughout the Muslim world, those of Ṭanṭā, Alexandria, Dassiūk, Damiṭṭā, and, of later foundation, one at Assiūt. The methods of instruction and courses of study were essentially similar in all of these. In his later reforms, Muḥammad 'Abduh attempted to affiliate the schools outside of Cairo more closely with Al-Azhar and co-ordinate their courses of study. The tremendous strides in public education in Egypt in recent years have been made in schools conducted by the Government (aside from private schools), of a type approximating more or less closely European standards.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 381.

³ The text was that of 'Sharḥ al-Kafrāwī 'alā al-Ajurrūmiyyah'. *Al-Manār*, viii. 381.

single thing, because of the harmful character of the method of instruction; for the teachers were accustomed to use technical terms of grammar or jurisprudence which we did not understand, nor did they take any pains to explain their meaning to those who did not know it.¹ Despairing of success in his studies, he ran away from school and hid for three months with some of his uncles; but his stepbrother happened upon him and took him back to Ṭantā. But so thoroughly persuaded was Muḥammad that he would never succeed in learning that he took his belongings and returned to his village, intending to follow agriculture as most of his relatives were doing, and never return to his studies; and with this intention he married, in the year 1865, at the age of sixteen.²

'This is the first effect which I experienced', he says further in his autobiography, 'from the method of instruction in Ṭantā, and it is the very same method which is in use in the Azhar; and this is the effect experienced by ninety-five out of a hundred of those whom fate does not permit to attend upon some one who does not follow this manner of instruction, namely, wherein the teacher throws out what he knows, and what he does not know, without paying regard to the pupil and his capacity for understanding. But the majority of the students who do not understand, deceive themselves into supposing that they do understand something, so that they continue their studies until they have reached the age of manhood, and all the while they are dreaming the dreams of children; and thereafter they are inflicted upon the people and become a calamity upon the public.'³ In an address which he delivered in 1884 to a gathering of learned men in Tunis upon the subject of education, and in which he urges, among

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 381.

² *Ibid.*, p. 381. M. Horten, in *Beiträge*, xiii (1915), 88, dates his marriage in 1871, on the basis of a statement in *Tarīkh*, iii. 124. But the dates given throughout the article from which the statement is taken, which is reproduced from a Tunisian newspaper, are manifestly unreliable, as is evident, e.g., from a comparison of the date in question, 1288/1871, when Muḥammad 'Abduh ran away from Ṭantā and was married, and that given for the beginning of his studies with Jamāl, viz. 1287/1870. Other inconsistencies appear also in the same article in the matter of dates, although the main facts of the article are evidently reproduced from the biography of *Al-Manār*.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 381, 382.

other things, better methods in beginning instruction in Arabic grammar, he refers again to his unfortunate experience in Tanṭā to illustrate the harmful effects of wrong methods.¹

But he was not thus to escape his destiny, by fleeing from his studies. Forty days after his marriage, his father, 'for some purpose that God willed',² compelled him to return to Tanṭā to school. But on the way he escaped and hid himself among relatives in the village of Kanayyisat Adrīn. 'And there', he says in the address already referred to, 'I chanced upon one who taught me how to seek learning from its nearest point of approach, so that I tasted its attractiveness and persevered in the search for it.'³ The person thus referred to, who became the mentor who woke within the young truant a love for studies and a zeal for the religious life, and thus changed the whole tenor of his life, was an uncle of Muḥammad's father, named Shaikh Darwīsh Khadr. This worthy man had travelled to some extent in the Libyan desert, and had even gone as far west as Tripoli. There he had taken up studies with a certain Sayyid Muḥammad al-Madanī,⁴ had gained some acquaintance with the Muslim sciences, and had been inducted by his master into the Shādhālī order of the Sūfī, or mystic, brotherhoods.⁵ He had memorized large portions of works on canon-law and the traditions, and was especially proficient in reciting the Qur'ān and also in understanding it. After completing his studies, he had returned to his village and engaged in agriculture.

¹ *Tafsīr sūrat al-'aṣr, wa Khīṭāb 'āmm fī al-tarbiyah wa al-ta'līm*, Cairo, Al-Manār Press, 2nd ed. (1330/1911), pp. 67, 68.

² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 382.

⁵ The word 'order', as applied to these fraternities, is the English, not the Arabic designation. The latter is 'ṭarīqah', plural 'ṭuruq', i.e. 'Way', 'Path', referring to the method of instruction, initiation, and religious exercises, the object of which is, by moral purification and inducement of a state of ecstasy, to attain to mystical union with God. The ritual, accordingly, lays stress upon the emotional religious life. These orders are very numerous in the Muslim world, and it would be difficult to over-emphasize their importance to the common religious life of Islām. The Shadhālī order is one of the most important and is very widely extended. It is strongly represented in Egypt, being much favoured by the Azhar University; for it was under the shadow of the Azhar that Abū Ḥasan 'Alī al-Shādhālī (d. A.D. 1258) first organized the order. *Vide Rinn, Marabouts et Khouan* (Algiers, 1884), pp. 220 sqq.; Depont and Cappolani, *Les Confréries religieuses musulmanes* (Algiers, 1897), pp. 443 sqq.

On the morning following Muḥammad's arrival in the village, so he relates in the autobiography already referred to, Shaikh Darwīsh came to visit him, carrying in his hand a book dealing with the ethical teachings, moral discipline, and ascetic practices of the brotherhood to which he belonged. He requested Muḥammad to read a portion of it aloud to him; but with a rebellious dislike for books and all those who had anything to do with them, Muḥammad cast the book from him. With quiet courtesy, the shaikh persisted in his request until, for shame, the young man took the book and read a few lines, which the shaikh explained as they were read, in a way to overcome Muḥammad's prejudice and lack of understanding. Soon, however, the village youths came to summon Muḥammad to join in their accustomed sports. He, therefore, at once flung down the book and went with them. The same afternoon the process was repeated, and on the following day. The third day a much longer time was spent in reading and Muḥammad became so interested that he began to read the book of his own volition and mark passages for question or remark. By the fifth day he had become as impatient of everything that kept him from reading as he had formerly been of all study. The shaikh instructed him in Ṣūfī doctrines and practices and gave him his first lessons in properly understanding the Qur'ān. The shaikh, moreover, impressed upon him a truth which came home to him almost with the force of a revelation, namely, that Muslims of unjust and untruthful life are, in reality, not true Muslims.

Fifteen days were spent in this manner of study, and at the end of that time Muḥammad returned to his lessons in Tanṭā. But how different now his spirit and his outlook on life. In this brief time he had been thoroughly won over to the Ṣūfī ideals of the religious life. From the eighth day of his stay, he had begun to practise the religious exercises recommended by Shaikh Darwīsh. 'But a few days had passed (from the beginning of these practices),' he writes, 'when, lo! you saw me soaring in spirit in a different world from that which I had known. The way which had seemed to me straitened had widened out before me. The life of this world which had appeared great to me, had become small,

and the acquirement of knowledge and the yearning of the soul towards God which had been small in my eyes had become great; and all my anxieties had been dispersed and there remained but one anxiety, namely, that I should become perfect in knowledge, perfect in discipline of the soul.¹ Moreover, I had found no leader to guide me in that towards which my soul was inclined, except that shaikh who had in a few days delivered me from the prison of ignorance into the open spaces of knowledge, and from the bonds of blind acceptance of authoritative belief (*taklīd*) into the liberty of the mystic union with God. . . . He is the key of my good fortune, if I have any in this life; he restored to me the natural gift which had left me, and revealed to me the natural capacities with which I had been endowed, which had been hidden from me.'

Thus with this experience there began a new period in the life of Muḥammad 'Abduh. His interest in Sūfism, aroused by Shaikh Darwish, gradually increased until it became the dominant influence in his life. During this second period, the shaikh retained his position as guide and mentor to the young student. But it remained for Muḥammad's second and greater teacher, Jamāl al-Dīn, to finally deliver him from his absorption in the world of mysticism and induct him into wider fields of scholarship and practical activities.²

¹ The terms are those in use among the mystics. 'Knowledge' (*al-ma'rifah*) is the 'Gnosis', the divine inner light; the 'discipline of the soul' (*adab al-nafs*) is the course of ascetic and religious practices to which the 'murid', or initiate, is subjected by his shaikh, or superior, with the purpose of leading him step by step from the lowest state of the soul to the highest, that of the 'Perfect Soul' (*al-nafs al-kāmilah*). Vide two articles by W. H. T. Gairdner, in *Moslem World*, vol. ii, on 'The Way of a Mohammedan Mystic'.

² The striking account of Muḥammad 'Abduh in regard to the spiritual crisis through which he had passed, recalls the fact that many of the great mystics of Islām are said to have passed through similar spiritual crises at some time in their lives, which led them to adopt the mystical religious life. The case of Al-Ghazzālī is an outstanding example in point. It might even be suggested that Muḥammad 'Abduh, writing his memoirs at a time when he had become a figure of some importance in the religious life of Egypt, and, indeed, of the world of Islām, was influenced, consciously or unconsciously, in interpreting his early experiences, by his familiarity with the lives of the great mystics and also his own later experiences of mysticism, and thus crystallized into one definite crisis that which in reality was the result of a process extending over a considerable period of time. The suggestion

Student and Mystic. 1865-77.

It was in the month of October, 1865, that Muḥammad 'Abduh returned to school in Ṭanṭā after the memorable two weeks spent under the training of Shaikh Darwish. He attached himself to two teachers who were beginning their courses of lectures and found to his joy that he had been so aroused from his former mental lethargy and indifference that he could understand what he read and heard. When the other students learned of his good fortune in being able to understand the lessons they flocked about him to avail themselves of his help in study. But, after a few months, he felt himself

might perhaps seem gratuitous and uncalled for, were it not that some of the biographical accounts written by those outside of Muḥammad 'Abduh's circle, while recognizing the decisive change which took place in his mind about this time with reference to his studies, give a more matter-of-fact explanation of it, and a somewhat different arrangement of events. Thus the daily newspaper *Al-Sharḥ*, in its issue of July 12, 1905 (*Tārīkh*, iii. 19), says that at the age of seven Muḥammad 'Abduh was sent to the village school (*kuttāb*) and attended for three years much against his will, for he wanted to be a farmer (*fallāḥ*) as his brothers were, and consequently learned nothing. His father then sent him to the Aḥmadī Mosque school in Ṭanṭā for three years and later to the Azhar in Cairo for two years, with no better results. Three reasons for this are given by Muḥammad 'Abduh, says *Al-Sharḥ*: his desire to be a 'fallāḥ' and the absence of inducements to study, the faulty methods of instruction, and the custom of the schoolboys of eating sweetmeats and unwholesome food at all hours, a practice which inevitably affected their ability to study. But, continues this account, when Muḥammad 'Abduh realized that his father was bent on his securing an education, he took counsel with himself and pulled himself together and thereafter learning was easy for him. No less responsible a writer than Jurjī Zaidān in his biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh in *Mashāḥīr*, i. 281, after referring to the fruitless periods of study in the *kuttāb*, at Ṭanṭā, and at the Azhar, and the fact that 'Abduh attributed this result largely to faulty methods of instruction, says that when the latter saw no escape from study, he roused himself and discovered for himself a method of study and set his mind to work in understanding what he read, and as a result found delight in learning, and applied himself diligently in the pursuit of it. This explanation of Muḥammad 'Abduh's course of action seems reasonable enough, had not he himself supplied a more intimate view of his motives. If his account is the true one, the other is at fault in dating his intellectual awakening after he had spent two years in the Azhar instead of during his study in Ṭanṭā. Moreover, the other explanation does not account for his extreme devotion to mysticism during his later student days, which is an undoubted fact, accounted for by his own statement. On the whole, there seems to be no good reason for rejecting, as at least substantially trustworthy, the key to the character and conduct of Muḥammad 'Abduh which he himself has supplied in this revealing bit of autobiography.

attracted to the famous centre of Islāmic learning in Cairo, the great school of the Azhar Mosque, commonly called the Azhar University. He accordingly left Ṭanṭā in February, 1866, and about a month later took up his studies at Al-Azhar.

The mosque of Al-Azhar was founded in the year A.D. 970 by Jawhar, the general of the Fāṭimid Sultān Abū Tamīm Ma'add (otherwise known as Al-Mu'izz li Dīn Allāh, A.D. 952–75), the year following his occupation of Egypt and immediately after the building of the new capital city, Al-Ḳāhirah (Cairo), where his troops were quartered, the mosque being intended for the use of the troops. Two years later it was opened for services. The mosque was enlarged from time to time by the Fāṭimid sultans after the transfer of their capital to Cairo, it was liberally endowed, and a flourishing school was developed within its precincts. During the centuries which followed, many rulers added to the building and endowment, and the reputation both of the sanctity of the mosque and the excellence of the school came to be widely acknowledged throughout the world of Islām. As the glory of many of the older institutions, once famous centres of learning, began to fade as a result of the ravages wrought by the Mongol invasion in the East and of the decline of Islām in the West, the school of Al-Azhar rose to a position of the first importance; and thus for centuries it has maintained its place as the leading Muslim educational institution and has attracted students from all Muslim lands.

The school of Al-Azhar is known as the Azhar University because all, or the greater part, of the Muslim sciences are taught there; but it is not a university in the western acceptance of the word.¹ The education imparted is religious or theological; those who have studied within its walls qualify, according to their scholastic attainments, as canon lawyers or judges in the various Muslim courts, as teachers

¹ The school is referred to in Arabic as 'al-jāmi' al-azhar' i.e. 'the Azhar Mosque', or more simply as 'al-Azhar'. The title 'al-Azhar' signifies 'the Splendid' or 'the Flourishing'; but Vollers, in *Leyden Enc. of Islām*, art. 'Al-Azhar', thinks the name is to be rightly interpreted as an allusion to 'Al-Zahrā', a title of Fāṭimah, since the mosque was founded by the Fāṭimid rulers.

of the Arabic language or others of the sciences taught in Al-Azhar, as leaders of the public prayers or preachers in the mosques, as chanters of the *Qur'ān* on public or private occasions, and are generally regarded by the commonalty as their authoritative religious teachers and leaders. All the sciences are valued for their relation to the proper interpretation of the *Qur'ān* and a correct knowledge of the doctrines and practices of Islām. The spirit which has dominated instruction in the university for centuries has been severely traditional. The chief object of the education which it imparts is not research and investigation for the purpose of improving the state of the sciences taught, but rather the transmission of these sciences as they were handed down by the early fathers of the faith, without change or deviation. The doors of independent investigation of the sources of the faith, and the formulation of independent opinion concerning them, were closed in Islām by the middle of the third century of the Hijrah, and consequently the authoritative interpreters of religion are those of the dim and distant past. It has only remained, therefore, for subsequent generations to elaborate and explain what the forefathers have laid down.

This traditional spirit is evident in the estimate placed upon the various sciences. The most important branches are the 'transmitted' or 'traditional' sciences (*al-'ulūm al-naqliyyah*). These are: dogmatic theology (*'ilm al-kalām*, *'ilm al-tawhīd*), interpretation of the *Qur'ān* (*tafsīr*), the Traditions (*ḥadīth*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and its principles (*uṣūl al-fiqh*); these are all based upon Divine revelation, and consequently, their sources are not subject to investigation or criticism, but are to be accepted as handed down by the fathers. These, with the addition of one or two other sciences, such as mysticism (*taṣawwuf*), and ethics (*'ilm al-akhlāq*), are known also as primary sciences, or those that are studied for their own sake (*'ulūm al-makāṣid*). Next come the 'rational' sciences (*al-'akliyyah*), which are grammar and syntax of the Arabic language (*naḥw*, *ṣarf*), prosody (*'ilm al-'arūd*), rhetoric (*al-balāghah*) in its three branches (*al-ma'ānī*, *al-bayān*, *al-badī'*), logic (*al-mantīq*), technical terms used in the science of the Traditions (*muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth*), and astronomy (*al-hay'ah*),

the last named being studied chiefly for practical purposes in determining chronology and times of prayer. These are also known as 'auxiliary sciences' (*'ulūm al-wasā'il*), those that are studied as a means to the understanding of the traditional sciences. Other sciences such as *belles-lettres*, history, geography, the physical sciences, mathematics, &c., have, since the Middle Ages, fallen into neglect, or if taught at all have been taught in a very inadequate way.¹

The teachers usually gave lectures to a circle of students who gathered about them, based upon the text of some author who was regarded as an authority upon the subject in hand; but rarely was this text in the hands of the students. Rather the student set himself to memorize by rote the commentary (*sharḥ*) of some later writer upon the original text, or the glosses (*ḥāshiyah*) of a still later writer upon the commentary, or still further superglosses and notes (*ta'līkāt, taḳārīr*) upon this, and the lesson consisted in discussion and explanation of the terms used by the writer. If a student succeeded in memorizing the text of one of these commentaries or glosses he considered that he understood the subject.²

Various attempts have been made from time to time to reform both the curriculum and methods of study of the Azhar, but always with indifferent success. Muḥammad 'Alī Pasha, though himself unlettered, had a great respect for European learning and desired to introduce it into Egypt; so he sent his first Educational Mission to Paris in 1828, with the intention of introducing European sciences into the Azhar by means of the teachers who had studied in France. Various European works, mostly French, were also translated into Arabic. But these attempts to introduce a new spirit into the Azhar only aroused contempt and opposition within that ancient institution. However, about this time (1827), Shaikh Al-Ṭanṭāwī, who afterwards went to St. Petersburg as a teacher of Arabic literature, began to give lectures upon the *Maḳāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī, a highly esteemed composition of rhymed prose of the twelfth century A.D., remarkable alike

¹ On the various sciences taught in the Azhar, *vide Enc. Islām*, art. 'Al-Azhar'; *Risālah*, p. xviii; *Beiträge*, xiii. 109; *Tārīkh*, iii. 254.

² Cf. *Al-Manār*, viii. 393, 399.

for its difficult style and extensive vocabulary and the liberal sentiments to which it sometimes gives expression. Such lectures had never been given before.¹ Shortly before Muḥammad 'Abduh entered the Azhar, the Khedive Ismā'il, in his zeal for Europeanizing Egypt, had renewed the attempts to reform the Azhar. He was supported in this by Shaikh Muḥammad al-'Abbāsī al-Mahdī, an able and energetic scholar who was at that time Shaikh (or, as he may be called, Rector) of Al-Azhar.² Various improvements were introduced into the curriculum and management of the school, among them a schedule of examinations by a board of six examiners. Examinations had not previously been required. But strong opposition had been aroused, led by Shaikh 'Ulaish, an able scholar but a violent reactionist; so that when Muḥammad 'Abduh entered the university, early in 1866, the reform movement was on the wane, although lectures were still being given by Shaikh Ḥasan al-Ṭawil on logic and philosophy.

When Muḥammad 'Abduh entered Al-Azhar, there was probably little in his personal appearance to distinguish him, in the eyes of the Azhar shaikhs, from hundreds of other young men of his age who had come in from the provinces. But his natural energy, his intellectual acumen, his thirst for learning, and his independent thought soon marked him as different from the majority of the students. For four years he followed the studies prescribed by the university and attended lectures with more or less regularity. He had not the patience to continue to sit under teachers whom he did not understand or from whose lectures he was not receiving

¹ The date given above for Shaikh al-Ṭanṭāwī's lectures is that given by Vollers in *Enc. Islām*, art. 'Al-Azhar'. Michel, *Introd.*, p. xix, gives 1867, but it would seem by mistake. If Al-Ṭanṭāwī had been giving lectures at this latter date, it would have been possible for Muḥammad 'Abduh to have attended them, and it would seem natural for him, with his restless search for something new, to have done so. But he makes no mention of him, although he does name two other teachers who benefited him. Cf. below.

² Shaikh Al-'Abbāsī was Shaikh al-Azhar from 1870 until 1882, when he was replaced by Muḥammad al-Anbābī; but he soon recovered his position and held it until 1887, when he was finally replaced by Al-Anbābī who was opposed to reform. Al-'Abbāsī was thus in office during Muḥammad 'Abduh's student days. Cf. *Enc. Islām*, art. 'Al-Azhar'; *Mashāḥir*, ii. 186-9.

benefit; so he absented himself from those lectures or sat reading from some book which he had brought with him. Meantime, he was searching eagerly through the books of the Azhar for information on subjects which were not being taught. His old friend and adviser, Shaikh Darwīsh, whom he continued to visit at intervals, encouraged him to study such subjects as logic, mathematics, and geometry, even though he had to search for them outside of the university. One teacher from whom he received help during this time was Shaikh Muḥammad al-Basyūnī. Somewhat later he attended the lectures of Shaikh Ḥasan al-Ṭawīl, already referred to, on logic and philosophy. But even Shaikh Ḥasan did not satisfy the desire that was in the heart of Muḥammad 'Abduh for something—he did not himself know exactly what—which he was not receiving. He felt that Shaikh Ḥasan's teaching was not definite and decisive in statement, but consisted of suppositions and conjectures.¹ Muḥammad 'Abduh himself was never content to leave a subject until he understood it; and finally he came to the place where, having understood a subject, he would not accept the teaching until satisfied with the proofs by which it was supported.² Later he used to say that the study of Arabic books according to the Azhar method had done injury to his intellect and his reason, and that for a number of years he had tried to sweep his mind clean of the influence of such methods but had never entirely succeeded.³

Meanwhile, from the time that he began his studies in the university, he was under the influence of Ṣūfism and gave himself up more and more to the practice of it.⁴ During the daytime he fasted, while still carrying on his studies, and spent the night in prayer, in reading the *Qur'ān*, and in the performance of *zikrs*.⁵ He even subjected himself to the wearing of a rough garment next to his body, and to other ascetic practices.⁶ He walked about with downcast eyes and spoke to no one except when it was necessary in his contact with teachers and fellow students.⁷ So absorbed did he

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 388.

² *Ibid.*, p. 400.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 386.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 396.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 398.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 386, 396.

finally become in his studies and meditations and self-discipline, that at times he lost all contact with the world of the senses and moved in an imaginary world where he thought that he held converse with the spirits of men of former generations.¹ He finally reached such a state of other-worldliness and aversion to association with people, that Shaikh Darwīsh, who had introduced him to the life of mysticism, felt it necessary, during a visit which Muḥammad made to him about the year 1871, to win him back to a more natural and normal life. This the shaikh did by pointing out to him that his learning was of no value unless it afforded some light of guidance for himself and others, and that if he wished to be of benefit to his fellow religionists by sharing with them what he had learned and guiding them to the knowledge of real religion, he must mingle with them. Accordingly the shaikh took him to gatherings of the neighbours where Muḥammad would be drawn into conversation on various subjects, and thus little by little won him back to the world of reality.²

But it was Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī who finally cured Muḥammad 'Abduh of his extreme devotion to Ṣūfism, although the first book of the latter, which appeared in 1874 under the title *Risālat al-wāridāt* ('Mystic Inspirations'), shows clearly the influence of his studies and experiences in mysticism, as well as of his studies in philosophy under Jamāl; and he retained his sympathy for Ṣūfism throughout his life. In the introduction to the work just mentioned,³ he tells of the great love of learning which possessed him and his eager but vain pursuit of it before the coming of Jamāl al-Dīn. In the course of his search he had happened upon some traces of what he calls 'the true sciences'; but he could find no one to guide him, and whenever he sought help he was told that to busy oneself with such subjects was unlawful or that the doctors of theology had proscribed them. 'When I meditated upon the reason for this,' he says, 'I saw that when one is ignorant of a thing he hates it.' It was while he was in this state of perplexity that there 'arose the sun of

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 396.

² *Ibid.*, p. 398.

³ Printed in *Tārīkh*, ii. 9-25.

Truth'—it is thus that he refers to the arrival of Jamāl al-Dīn—in whose light he attained satisfaction in his quest for knowledge, and found himself ushered into a new world in which mystic excesses had less and less attraction for him.

It was because Jamāl al-Dīn was himself a Ṣūfī, and had travelled far along the mystic 'path' and was even more conversant with those things experienced by Ṣūfīs 'which it is unlawful to speak of' than was Muḥammad 'Abduh himself, that he was able to convince his young pupil of his attainments in this respect as well as in the field of scholarship, and thus deliver him from the toils of an attraction from which few escape who have once been involved.¹ Ṣūfism was the subject of conversation between them at their first meeting. Muḥammad 'Abduh, in company with Shaikh Ḥasan al-Ṭawīl, called upon Jamāl al-Dīn soon after his arrival in Cairo for his first brief visit in 1869, and found him at his evening meal. In the conversation which followed, Jamāl drew out his visitors on the subject of Qur'ān interpretation, discussing with them what the orthodox interpreters have to say on certain passages, and what the Ṣūfī interpretation of the same passages is. *Taṣawwuf* and *tafsīr*!—mysticism and Qur'ān interpretation—the two subjects at that time most dear to the heart of Muḥammad 'Abduh. As though with the insight and sympathy of a great teacher, Jamāl discerned the inclinations and interests of the young student and sought to draw him to himself.

When Jamāl al-Dīn returned to Cairo from Constantinople about a year and a half later (March 22, 1871),² Muḥammad

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 397.

² In regard to this date, as in the case of many dates in the life of Muḥammad 'Abduh, there is lack of agreement among the various accounts. The dates given above are those given by E. G. Browne and *Mashāhīr* for Jamāl's arrival in Egypt on the two separate occasions, between which there intervened the stay in Constantinople. He arrived first in Egypt 1285/1869. The address in Constantinople which led to his expulsion was given in Ramaḍān 1287/ close of 1870. He arrived in Egypt the second time the first of Muḥarram, 1288/ March 22, 1871. These dates agree best with previous events in Jamāl's life. But Muḥammad 'Abduh says (*Al-Manār*, viii. 387) that he associated with Jamāl, beginning with the first of Muḥarram, 1287. In the Introd. to 'Al-wāridāt' (*Tārīkh*, ii. 9), he refers to the arrival of Jamāl and the beginning of his studies with him as in 1290/1873, but he may there refer to some particular study, e.g. philosophy. Michel,

'Abduh began to study regularly with him and soon came to 'follow him like his shadow'.¹ In his enthusiasm he invited many of his fellow students and others to attend the gatherings in the lodgings of Jamāl, in which the latter not only read and discussed with his pupils many works of Muslim scholars which were then much neglected, but also charmed all who attended these gatherings with his own learned and engaging conversation and comment on a variety of subjects. He was always lavish, and even indiscriminating, in scattering his treasures of wisdom to all who came, whether they were 'devotees of wisdom' or not.² His method of reading the ancient Arabic works was very different from that of the Azhar. 'He would often explain the meaning of a point under discussion until it became clear to the understanding, then he would read the statement of the book and apply it to the point in question; if it was applicable, well; if not, he would point out what was lacking in it. Or he would read the statement of the book and examine into its proofs, and either establish it, or disprove it and establish a different conclusion. In this way he would proceed until he had given his own decision in matters discussed; and he was not satisfied with a mere understanding of the book and assent to the opinions of the writer.'³

After he had read the ancient Arabic authorities in this way and imparted new life to them, he introduced his pupils to a number of modern works on various sciences, which had been translated into Arabic. Thus, still another world was opened before the gaze of Muḥammad 'Abduh, that of Western scientific thought and achievement. This was to be scarcely a less decisive influence in his life than was the independent attitude of thought towards the ancient authorities which Jamāl exemplified in his teaching. Jamāl also trained his pupils in writing articles for the Press, on literary,

Introd., p. xxiv, dates Jamāl's arrival 1872. The confusion may in part arise from the necessity of using two systems of dating, the Christian and the Muslim.

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 389.

² *Ibid.*, p. 390.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 399, 400. A list of the works studied, in Sūfism, logic, philosophy, jurisprudence, astronomy, ancient and modern, is given *ibid.*, pp. 388, 389. Among the works on philosophy, the best known to Westerners is *Theses and Explanations* ('*Al-ishārāt*') of Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā, A.D. 980-1037).

social, and political subjects, and gave them practice likewise in public speaking. In time Muḥammad 'Abduh came to excel his master as an eloquent and convincing public speaker, for with all his fluency and power as a speaker, Jamāl had not been born to the use of the Arabic language as Muḥammad 'Abduh had been and never entirely lost traces which indicated this fact.¹

Muḥammad 'Abduh has preserved the substance of two of Jamāl al-Dīn's lectures, in a digest of them which he contributed to the Press at the time of their delivery.²

The first is on 'The Philosophy of Education'. In this lecture, he compares health of morals to health of the physical organism in plant and animal life: just as in the physical organism health depends upon the preservation of the proper balance between conflicting elements and tendencies, so that no one of two opposing tendencies becomes stronger than the other, so in moral health, it is necessary for a proper balance to be preserved between pairs of opposing tendencies, one a virtue and one a vice, as, for example, between courage and fear, or generosity and niggardliness. If one overpowers or outbalances the other, the moral health is impaired. The sciences of education and discipline have been developed to preserve to the soul its virtues, or to restore them if weakened or lost. Those who are entrusted with the education of a people and the training of its morals are 'physicians of souls and spirits', and should be familiar with the principles of moral health as physicians with those of physical health. They should know the history of their own nation and of other nations, their periods of advancement or decline, the causes of the moral weaknesses which have appeared among them and the proper remedy to be applied for their cure. Ignorance in these spiritual doctors will inevitably reflect itself in the moral health of the nation. Ignorant doctors are worse than none at all. These spiritual doctors who are responsible for moral guidance may be divided into two classes, orators and preachers, and writers and authors, including journalists.

In the second lecture, on 'The Arts', after speaking of the various stages of man's intellectual and social development, and showing how the various useful arts have been evolved in the process of man's development, and their value to society, he proceeds to demonstrate the necessity of co-operation between the various arts and between the various individuals for the benefit

¹ Ibid., p. 389; cf. above, p. 4, n. 1.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 26-36.

of society. The arts are dependent, one upon the other, and each individual is dependent upon many arts, even for the physical necessities of life. 'How then can he be independent when he is in need of the fruits of all the arts day by day, indeed hour by hour? Co-operation in work is therefore a necessity that each one may be repaid for the value of his own work by the fruit of the work of others. Thus, human society will become like a body composed of members, wherein each member works for the benefit of the body.' If the individual realizes this mutual interdependence, he should endeavour to take his place as a true member of the body and work for the benefit of the whole. 'The principle of this work for the whole body is what we call "the arts", so that if any one has no real work to do which will benefit human society and will be of assistance to the order of the whole organization, he is like the paralytic member which is of no value to the body but rather a burden.'

But Jamāl al-Dīn imparted to his pupils much more than mere instruction, however learned and valuable it was in itself. 'It was as though the man', says Jirjī Zaidān, referring to the literary revival which was occasioned by Jamāl's teaching, 'had breathed into them his own spirit; and they opened their eyes, and behold, they had been in darkness and the light had come to them. So they caught from him, in addition to learning and philosophy, a living spirit that caused them to see their state as it really was, inasmuch as the veil of false ideas had been rent from their minds. They therefore roused themselves to activity in writing, and put forth articles on literary, philosophical and religious subjects.'¹

The time in which Jamāl's activity in Egypt fell was favourable, indeed, for such attempts as he was making to arouse the young men of Egypt. The Khedive Ismā'il had been introducing European ideas into the country more rapidly than they could be assimilated. But his efforts led to the superficial result that many of the educated people anticipated that the country was about to enter upon a glorious era of national advancement, and felt that they themselves were fully prepared to take their proper part in it. On the other hand, the extravagances of Ismā'il were inevitably leading to that foreign intervention against which Jamāl was

¹ *Mashāhīr*, i. 281.

warning the country, and the shadows of the coming day of reckoning were already casting themselves before, although that day itself did not arrive until after Jamāl had been banished from Egypt.

Something of this spirit of anticipation is evident in an article written by Muḥammad 'Abduh, which is one of five articles preserved in the *Biography* by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, of those which he contributed to the newspapers during this period, all of which show, as Professor M. Horten remarks,¹ 'the high fervour of youth'. The article in question was contributed to *Al-Ahrām* ('The Pyramids'), at present the oldest of the daily newspapers of Cairo, at that time a weekly, under date of September 3, 1876, and is in the nature of an address of welcome to this newspaper which had just been founded.² The young Azhar shaikh (for Muḥammad 'Abduh was still a student in the Azhar) recalls in his article that Egypt was, in past ages, one of the greatest of the kingdoms of the earth, that its civilization had attained its full growth when that of other nations was in its infancy, that from Egypt civilization had removed to the nations of the West, where after many vicissitudes, it had attained its highest development. And now the wheel of time has come full circle, and civilization has returned to the place of its birth, and has been joyously welcomed and honoured by Egypt, and in return is devoting itself to her service. Even greater attainments can be expected in this present day than in the days of the pyramids of old. And of this new civilization *Al-Ahrām* ('The Pyramids') will be the handmaid.

The other four articles, all written during the year 1876, bear likewise the impress of the stirring times in which they were written, and show also the influence of Jamāl's teaching.

The second article discusses the essential and necessary part which the art of writing has played in the cultural development of mankind, and concludes with an application to the value of

¹ *Beiträge*, xiii (1916), 88.

² This article appeared in the fifth issue, cf. *Tārīkh*, ii. 36. The other articles follow, pp. 39-67. Cf. Michel, p. xxvii; *Beiträge*, xiii. 88, 89, for comment on these articles. For an account of the founding of *Al-Ahrām* and biography of its founder and editor, Salīm Bey Taqlā, vide *Mashāhīr*, ii. 89-93.

newspapers in the direction and regulation of both the religious and political affairs of a nation. The third article is on 'Human and Spiritual Leaders'. By the human leader is meant the physical powers and senses of man, which are concerned with his physical welfare, and by the spiritual, his intellectual powers which are responsible for the solving of dark problems and the acquisition of worthy capabilities. Men may, accordingly, be divided into two classes, those who care only for earthly and animal-like things, and those who rise to the state of man-like reason. The more one's instinct is elevated towards the human, the more does he incline towards a reasonable course of life, towards justice and the conquest of ignorance, and insistence upon proof. Thus far the article has had an ethical and philosophical tinge. But the application is seen in the conclusion. There are some to whom the virtues of reason are only a name, who accept belief on authority and forbid the teaching of philosophy. There are some who are rejoicing in the present evil state of the country and the prospect of domination of the country by foreigners. 'This is only to fall into the pit of animalism, and to drop below the level of humanity.' Instead, all should unite against the common enemy, forgetting all differences of sects. The case of the Egyptians is like that of two brothers who frequently quarrel, the one with the other, but, when an outsider interferes, forget their quarrels and unite against the intruder.

The fourth article is on 'Speculative Theology and the Demand for the Contemporary Sciences'. The case of an Azhar student is cited (the story bears not a little resemblance to his own), who studied certain works on logic and dogmatic theology. Although the logical sciences are intended to be an aid to speculative theology, yet the friends of this young student, in great perturbation, warned him against such studies and advised and threatened, and caused his father to come in haste to Cairo to save him; and the father would only be satisfied after the student had sworn on the *Qur'ān* that his faith was still intact and he would not further study these dangerous subjects. Yet these sciences are taught in Muslim universities, east and west, and the greatest of Muslim scholars, Al-Ghazzālī and others, have made their study an individual duty (*farḍ 'ain*), while all the 'Ulamā agree that it is a general duty (*farḍ kifāyah*). Such study is needed, especially in these days, for the defence of religion. If this be our attitude towards sciences that have been nourished in the bosom of Islām for more than a thousand years, what, pray, is our state with

reference to the useful modern sciences that are among the necessities of our life in these days? How much more do we put our fingers into our ears, if they are even mentioned. If this were an age of barbarous rulers, or there were no intercourse with civilized countries, there might be excuse for such an attitude. But all this is in a day when learning is general, and intercourse with other countries is common, and when the Khedive (Ismā'il) is doing more for the increase of education and the general welfare than the ruler of any other country.

The 'Ulamā, who are 'the spirit of this nation', have, up to the present, seen no benefit in these modern sciences, but continue to busy themselves with what was perhaps more suitable for a time long past whose records are closed. They pay no attention to the fact that we are in a new world. 'The days have cast us, with our religion and our honour, into a desert filled with ravening lions, each one seeking his prey. If we are one of the lions, we can protect ourselves and our religion, otherwise we must either cast aside our religion and escape with our lives, or perish because of ignorance and the error of our way.' We must study the affairs of neighbouring religions and states to learn the reason for their advancement. And when we have learned it, we must hasten towards it, that we may overtake what is past and prepare for what is coming. 'We see no reason for their progress to wealth and power except the advancement of education and the sciences among them. Our first duty, then, is to endeavour with all our might and main to spread these sciences in our country.'

A similar modern note is struck in the last article of the series. The article begins by pointing out that, in spite of the great wealth of vocabulary of the Arabic language, and the fact that at one time it was the language in which great works in the physical sciences, theology, mathematics, medicine, and all the other arts and sciences were written, yet it has fallen into decline, and other nations have surpassed the Arabic-speaking nations in the sciences, in education, and material civilization. But more recently some modern scientific works have been translated into Arabic. But there has been a lack of any work on the political sciences or the history of the progress of civilization. This lack has been now supplied in the appearance of an Arabic translation of Guizot's *History of Civilization*. The article closes with the quotation of comment by Jamāl al-Dīn on the book just translated. The present state of European civilization, he says, is the result of preparatory measures wisely taken with a view to producing these

results. Every one should study these measures in order to make use of them in raising up his own country. This book has gathered together all the conditions and causes and means that had any part in producing the present civilization of Europe.

The opinions of Muḥammad 'Abduh, as expressed in these articles, have been given at some length because they reveal the influences which were at work in moulding his thought and were eventually to cause him to be known as the leading modernist of the Azhar circle. They show us, too, how early, while yet a student in the Azhar, he is taking up, under the tuition of Jamāl al-Dīn, the role of public reform, and how far he has travelled in thought since those days, only a few years previously, when he was buried in mystic visions and abstractions and thought of the outside world with a profound distaste.

This advance in thought is evident also in the two serious works which he published during this period. The first has already been referred to, *Al-wāridāt*, which appeared in 1874. It is a work, says Professor Horten, which shows 'fine ardour and philosophic endowment'.¹ The influence of his Azhar studies, and particularly of his studies and experiences in mysticism, is traceable, and also that of the teaching of Jamāl, more especially in the philosophic trend and his earnest desire to be free from the shackles of tradition. He speaks of himself in the introduction as 'one who has turned away from such subjects as dogmatics and dialectic, and has freed himself from the chains of adherence to sects, to be at liberty to pursue the chase of knowledge'.² His thought in this work is Ṣūfistic and pantheistic. He maintains, as is commonly done by Ṣūfī philosophers, that the only real existence is that of God. Thus he says: 'But we say, there is no existence except his existence, and no attribute except his attributes. He is then the Existent One and other than he is non-existent.'³ 'In certain points, e.g. in regard to the attributes of God,' says Horten, 'he is later less youthfully and enthusiastically cock-sure and certain, rather more cautious and almost sceptical.' In this spirit of enthusiastic certainty, he joins issue with the philosophers and with Al-Ash'arī regarding

¹ *Beiträge*, xiii. 85, 86.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 9.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

the character of the Knowledge of God, of His Comprehension and His Will. He treats also of God's creation of the world, of Mankind and Prophecy, of Immortality.

His second work, published in 1876, is of a decidedly different character.¹ It is a collection of glosses on the commentary of Al-Jalāl al-Dawānī on *Al-'akā' id al-'Aḍudiyyah*. This latter work is a brief theological treatise in explanation of the articles of the faith, by 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355), one of the later theologians of the Ash'arite school. It treats of the differences which separate the various schools of theological thought, points out the differences which lie only in manner of statement and those which are matters of essentials, and attempts to mediate a reasonable statement acceptable to all. For his time he was a rationalist. The moderation of his brief statement has made it acceptable as a catechism for a long time.

'This was the subject chosen by Shaikh 'Abduh who, two years earlier, had been plunged into pure mysticism; and if this choice is characteristic of the change which had come over him, the ideas which he expressed in this work are still more so. Starting from a well-known tradition (which Western criticism considers, however, apocryphal), according to which the Prophet is reputed to have said: "My people will be divided into seventy-three sects, and the adherents of all these seventy-three sects will enter hell except one", the author deduces from this that the Muslims of the different rites should practise the greatest tolerance towards one another; for no one can say with certainty that he belongs to the sect which is to be saved. He further draws from it another conclusion of the greatest significance, namely, that

¹ The date is on the authority of Michel, p. xxv. In a list of the works written by Muhammad 'Abduh, given in *Al-Manār*, viii. 492, this work appears fourth in an order that is 'approximately' that of their composition, following *Falsafat al-ijtimā' wa al-tārīkh* ('Philosophy of Society and History'), which embodied his lectures on Ibn Khaldūn in Dār al-'Ulūm, 1878. A difference of two or three years in the date of writing would not impair, however, the contrast with the earlier work. It is rather heightened by the fact that the second work in the list of *Al-Manār* is entitled *Risālah fī waḥdat al wujūd* ('Treatise on the Unity of Existence') which deals, according to *Al-Manār*, with 'the orders of existence, their variety from one point of view, and their general organization, and their unity from another point of view'. The general point of view is that of *Al-wāridāt*.

reason is the only guide which will lead us to the true faith.¹

Meanwhile, during these years that have been adding to Muḥammad 'Abduh's store of learning, and widening his vision and his interests in the directions indicated, he continued his connexion with the Azhar and carried on his studies there. It would seem that, for the most part, his study consisted in searching in the books of the library of the university, independently of the lectures; for a great deal of antagonism was aroused among the teachers of the university against Muḥammad 'Abduh and Jamāl al-Dīn. This was partly due, of course, to their conservative dislike for the teaching of philosophy which Jamāl was reviving, and to his modernizing attitude in general.² But there would seem to have been a considerable amount of jealousy also, because Muḥammad 'Abduh and others of the students had been attending the lectures of Jamāl, possibly to the neglect of their own. Muḥammad 'Abduh was not content, moreover, to keep to himself the benefits of the new methods of study which he had received from Jamāl, but tried to spread the spirit of reform among the students who sought help from him in their studies. He read with them a number of advanced texts in theology, which were not being taught in the Azhar. One such text was the commentary of Al-Taftazānī (d. A.D. 1389) on *Al-'aḳā' id al-Nasafiyyah* ('The Creed of Al-Nasafi', d. A.D. 1142), a creed which has points of contact with Mu'tazilite doctrines. Word was carried by some of the students to Shaikh 'Ulaish, the leader of the strict conservative party, that Muḥammad 'Abduh was reviving the teaching of the Mu'tazilites. The shaikh called him to account, but the offence which particularly aroused him was, that a student should presume to teach a difficult work which none of the Azhar shaikhs cared to undertake to teach. The answer of Muḥammad 'Abduh, when the shaikh inquired if he had given up Ash'arite teaching to follow the Mu'tazilite, was not calculated to win him favour with the conservative old shaikh. 'If I give up blind acceptance of Ash'arite doctrine, why should I take up blind acceptance of the Mu'tazilite? Therefore I am giving up

¹ *Risālah*, p. xxv.

² Cf. above, p. 7, note 1.

blind acceptance of both, and judge according to the proof presented.¹

This incident, which caused some little commotion in the Azhar at the time, was the beginning of many spiteful accusations and derogatory attacks which were continually being directed against Jamāl and Muḥammad 'Abduh. The feeling aroused almost resulted, in the end, in the latter's failure to receive the licence to teach, which is the equivalent of the degree of the university granted to students who successfully pass the examinations. For when he came before the examiners in the latter part of May, 1877, he found the majority of the examiners already prejudiced against him and determined to refuse to allow him a passing grade in his examinations. But he did such exceptional work in the examinations, that when Shaikh Muḥammad Al-'Abbāsī, the liberal rector of the university, intervened on his behalf, the examiners could not well refuse to allow him to pass, and compromised by giving him a passing grade of the second class, instead of the special grade, above first class, which the rector felt that he deserved.²

When Muḥammad 'Abduh received his degree as 'ālim', he passed out of the Azhar as a student, but returned almost immediately as a teacher. With this, his student days came formally to an end. But in reality he continued to be a student to the end of his days. 'I am still a student', he said in his last days, 'desiring some increase of knowledge each day.'³ In this spirit he entered upon the work of teaching for which all his studies had been preparing him.

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 391.

² *Ibid.*, viii. 393.

³ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER III

MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH: BIOGRAPHY (*cont.*)

1877-88: *Beginnings of Public Life.*

Teacher and Journalist: 1877-82.

I WAS not created to be anything but a teacher', said Muḥammad 'Abduh of himself some years later than this period, when he was being importuned to accept another position than that of his chosen profession. And, in truth, the manner in which he, in his later public life, turned every position of influence which he ever held into a channel for the dissemination of his ideas and the education of the public, shows how deep-seated within him was the inclination to instruct and educate, and justifies his belief that he was born to such a career. Moreover, the training which he had received from Jamāl al-Dīn and the desire to render service to his religion and his country which had been strongly awakened within him, provided an additional motive for an immediate entrance upon the work of training others after his own period of study had been completed. He accordingly entered with enthusiasm upon the work of teaching, after having received his licence from the Azhar.

He gave lectures in the Azhar on a wide range of subjects, applying in the teaching of theological subjects the same methods of reasoning and logical proof which Jamāl al-Dīn had taught him to use.¹ He also gave lectures in his own house to numbers of the Azhar students who came to him. One course of lectures was based upon *Tahdhīb al-akhlāk* ('Character Training') by Ibn Maskawaih (d. A.D. 1030), a work on ethics which is highly valued in the East to this day. He employed, as a basis for his lectures on political science, Guizot's *History of Civilization in Europe and in France*, which, as stated above, had only recently been translated into Arabic.

Towards the close of the year 1878, Muḥammad 'Abduh was appointed by the influence of Riāḍ Pasha, then Prime

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 404.

Minister, teacher of history in the school called 'Dār al-'Ulūm'. This school had been founded at the instance of 'Alī Pasha Mubārak, then Minister of Education under the Khedive Ismā'il, in the year A.H. 1290 (A.D. 1873).¹ It represented an attempt on the part of those who despaired of reforming the Azhar, to train the 'Ulamā in a more practical modern way by teaching some modern sciences in addition to the sciences taught in the Azhar. Muḥammad 'Abduh at once began a course of lectures on the *Prolegomena* of Ibn Khaldūn, the great philosophical historian (d. A.D. 1406). Not only was the teaching of this work a new departure in Egypt, but the method of teaching it was also unheard of hitherto. The young professor took the ideas of the great historian on the causes of the rise and fall of nations, the principles of civilization and the organization of human society, and made them a point of departure for adding ideas of his own on political and social affairs, drawn from modern works, and applied the whole in a practical manner to the case of his own country.²

At the same time he was appointed teacher of the Arabic Language and Literature in the Khedivial School of Languages, and held this position while continuing to teach in the Azhar and Dār al-'Ulūm. He made it his special endeavour in his teaching of the Arabic sciences, to revise the methods of teaching then commonly in use, which, as before noted, he felt were greatly at fault. In all of his teaching, in fact, he did not lose sight of the motive of reform. His general purpose was 'to bring into being a new generation among the people of Egypt, which will revive the Arabic language and the Islāmic sciences, and will correct the deviations of the Egyptian Government'.³ This reference to the Egyptian Government recalls the spirit of profound discontent which at that time was spreading among the educated classes, as

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 242. The date given by Michel, *Introd.*, p. xxviii, is 1872, by Horten, *Beiträge*, viii. 106, is 1871, and by K. Vollers, *Enc. Islām*, art. 'Alī Pasha Mubārak', is 1870, apparently. The purpose of the school was to train Qādis for the Maḥkamah Shar'iyyah (Courts of Personal Statute) and teachers for the secondary schools. It was found advisable to found a separate School for Qādis (1907), consequently the Dār al-'Ulūm was continued as a training school for teachers. *Vide* also biographical account of 'Alī Pasha Mubārak in *Mashāḥīr*, ii. 34-9.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 403, 404; *Tārīkh*, iii. 240.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 404.

they saw the government passing helplessly under the control of foreigners through the attempts which were made to reorganize the financial system of the country. It is significant that Muḥammad 'Abduh was then proposing education as a means to a better state of things in the future. His emphasis, on the one hand, upon character development, and on the other, upon training in principles of government in his own classes, shows that, practically, he was setting about the task.

But his teaching career was soon interrupted. On June 25, 1879, the Khedive Ismā'il abdicated in favour of his son Tawfīk Pasha. The latter soon disappointed the hopes of a liberal policy of reform which his attitude and promises before his accession had encouraged, by expelling the Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn from the country,¹ and by removing Muḥammad 'Abduh from the Dār al-'Ulūm and the Khedivial School of Languages, and ordering him to go into retirement in his native village, Maḥallat Naṣr, and not leave it. This was in September, 1879. Muḥammad 'Abduh's well-known connexion with Jamāl, and his own advanced ideas on religion and politics as he had made them known in his teaching and his newspaper contributions, would seem to have been the reasons which led to this action against him.²

The former liberal Prime Minister, Riāḍ Pasha, was not in the country at the moment when this action was taken. When he returned later,³ he appointed Muḥammad 'Abduh, in September 1880, one of three editors of *Al-Waḳā'i' al-Miṣriyyah* ('The Egyptian Events'), which was the official organ (*Journal Officiel*) of the Government. A short time later he was made editor-in-chief, and was permitted to associate with himself in the editorial work a number of writers who, like himself, had been trained in writing by Jamāl al-Dīn, and had also attended his own lectures and were in sympathy with his aims. These assistant editors were Shaikh 'Abd al-Karīm Salmān, a life-long friend and supporter; Shaikh Sa'ad Zaghlūl, then a student in the Azhar,

¹ For possible explanations of this action, cf. above, p. 7, n. 2.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 405. The reference of *Tārīkh*, iii. 82, to suspicions and accusations against Muḥammad 'Abduh and his associates, 'champions of the intellectual awakening', suggests Azhar machinations.

³ *Tārīkh*, iii. 161, 169.

about twenty-one years of age, later to become the national leader and spokesman of the Egyptian movement for political independence; and Shaikh Sayyid Wafā.¹

Al-Waḳā' i' al-Miṣriyyah was, at the time of 'Abduh's appointment as editor-in-chief, 'an affair of official notices together with some departmental announcements and accounts of local events'.² The new editor took immediate steps for its improvement and the enlargement of the scope of its influence. He outlined a definite régime for the Department of Publications, which was responsible, among other publications, for the *Journal Officiel*, and this régime was approved and made effective by Riād. One of the requirements thus put into effect was that all offices and departments of the Government, including the courts, were to present for publication in the *Journal Officiel*, reports giving an account of all actions and decisions already concluded, all projects then in hand, and those proposed for future action.³ The editor-in-chief had the right of criticism of anything in these reports which, in his judgement, deserved criticism, not only in the form in which they were presented but also in all the actions and decisions of the different departments. Such publicity and criticism created a degree of wholesome concern in the hearts of officials, inasmuch as the editor-in-chief was, in reality, speaking as the mouth-piece of the Government, and led to gradual improvement in the work of all departments. So insistent was the editor upon higher literary standards in official reports that those responsible for writing them were obliged, many of them, to attend night schools which were opened for the purpose of training writers and journalists, in which Muḥammad 'Abduh himself volunteered to give instruction.

As chief of the Department of Publications, the editor-in-chief of the *Journal Officiel* also had the right of censorship of all newspapers, whether under foreign or Egyptian control, which were published in the country. Charges brought

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 406. Others who were associated with Jamāl and Muḥammad 'Abduh during the days of Ismā'il Pasha were Ibrāhīm Bey al-Lakānī, Hifnī Bey Nāṣif, Muḥammad Bey Ṣālih, Sulṭān Effendi Muḥammad, and others, p. 404.

² *Tārikh*, iii. 82.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 406-9; *Tārikh*, iii. 240, 241.

against government officials by any newspaper must be investigated by the Government; if disproven, the newspaper was subject to warning, and, under repeated offences, to temporary or even permanent suppression.¹ Higher literary standards in the Arabic newspapers were likewise insisted upon: one prominent newspaper was warned that, within a specified date, it must provide a more competent editorial staff or be suppressed. Thus 'Abduh turned his power to good account in promoting a literary revival in Egypt.

From the beginning he directed attention to the state of education in the country and published frequent criticisms of the schools, teachers, methods of instruction, and general conduct of the educational programme, which reflected upon the efficiency of the Department of Education. As a result, a Superior Council to the Department of Education was created on March 31, 1881, with executive powers, and 'Abduh was made a member of this council. He was also made a member of a sub-committee of this body which was appointed to study the matter of the improvement of the educational programme in all schools, and was the Arabic secretary to the sessions of the committee.² The Department of Wakfs (Religious Foundations and Endowments) likewise profited by his advice and suggestion, as did other departments of the Government also.

Not content, however, with restricting the influence of the *Journal Officiel* to the narrow sphere of governmental circles, important as was its influence there, Muḥammad 'Abduh secured a still wider hearing for his views and a wider field

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 407.

² Among the actions favoured by the Superior Council was one proposed by Muḥammad 'Abduh, by which the Government would make a grant in gift of a considerable sum of money to the schools in Egypt under foreign control, in recognition of their services to education. It was naturally expected that such schools would be pleased with such recognition and accept the gift. But a supplementary action was also taken, placing all such schools under government inspection, on the ground that they had received a subsidy from the Government. The justification for the action was, first, the desirability of government control of all instruction in the schools of the country, and second, the fact that all European governments maintain such oversight of the schools to which they grant subsidies. But the proposals were prevented from being put into effect by the 'Arābī Rebellion. *Al-Manār*, viii. 410.

for his reforming activities, by creating a literary department in the *Journal* in which he and his collaborators could express their opinions on subjects that were engaging, or should engage, public interest. The importance of such a means of moulding public opinion was enhanced by the fact that at that time there were few newspapers in Egypt. The thirty-six articles which Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā has preserved in his *Biography* as illustrative of 'Abduh's contributions to *Al-Wakā'i' al-Miṣriyyah*,¹ deal with many phases of national life and show the writer's deep concern that the progress of the nation, at a time when there was much talk of advancement and much imitation of European ways, should be built upon real and enduring values. Reference has already been made to his criticisms of the Government's conduct of its schools. But he has more than criticism to offer; he returns to the problem of education again and again. In his opinion the problem of raising the whole nation to a higher level of culture and education is not the simple matter that some people who think themselves educated conceive. It is not simply a matter of acquiring a smattering of European sciences or of imitating Europeans in their manner of life, for, in the majority of instances where such views of education have been held, the result has been the imitation of Europeans in their customs, buildings, dress, furniture, and expensive luxuries; and this has led to the creation of a spirit which ignores the straight path of true glory and personal honour. But the uplift of the nation can only be accomplished by following the path for the uplift of individuals. Customs must be changed gradually, beginning with the simplest changes. The reform of the character, ideas and actions of the people is the most important duty of the nation. Without this no reform is possible. But this is a long process which requires time, the first step of which is the improvement of education.²

He discusses also the influence of the teaching which a child receives upon its religious beliefs, and cautions parents against

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 68-228. Thirty-seven articles are given, but one, a brief article on 'A Word on Politics', not from the pen of Muḥammad 'Abduh, was included by mistake, pp. 223-5. For résumé of these articles, cf. Michel, pp. xxx-xxxii, and *Beiträge*, xiii. 89-91.

² Article on 'The Error of the Intellectuals', *Tārīkh*, ii. 131-43.

sending their children to schools conducted by other faiths or other religious bodies than their own, unless they are prepared to see their children, when they grow up to years of discretion, change their faith and accept that of their teachers. For it is inevitable that religious teaching in the impressionable years of childhood should influence the child's thinking and character. The parents can therefore blame only themselves if such change of faith results in the case of their children.¹ Another article discusses 'Learning and its influence upon the will and the power of choice',² another 'Practice and Custom',³ another 'Civilization', returning to the idea, held by some, especially the wealthy, that to be civilized means to spend money uselessly.⁴

Another type of article deals with customs and practices of the nation which demand reform. Bribery is condemned and the common acceptance of it as a means of securing justice or government action in the most trifling cases is deplored.⁵ Marriage is discussed as a necessary institution, the injustices caused by polygamy and its deteriorating influence upon family life are acknowledged, but the practical intent of the Islāmic Law (*Shari'ah*), by its insistence upon justice being done to each wife, is shown to be in favour of monogamy.⁶ Other articles advocate the abandonment of religious practices that are harmful or contrary to the spirit of true worship.⁷ The tendency to spend money foolishly and extravagantly is deplored in other articles; the 'golden mean' between poverty and extravagance is unknown. True poverty is lack of education and inability to use material advantages wisely.⁸

A third group of articles deals with the political life of the nation. Reverence for the laws of the country is one of the essentials for its prosperity; but these laws should differ

¹ 'Influence of teaching on religion and religious beliefs', *Tārīkh*, ii. 173 sqq. ² *Ibid.*, pp. 184-200. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 218. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

⁵ 'Reprehensibility of Bribery', two articles, pp. 99 sqq.

⁶ 'Marriage a necessity to man', pp. 122 sqq.; 'The regulations of the *Shari'ah* regarding polygamy', pp. 125 sqq.

⁷ 'Abolishment of Innovations by the Department of *Wakfs*', *Tārīkh*, ii. 144 sqq.; 'Abolishment of the *Doseh*', two articles, pp. 147 sqq.

⁸ e.g. 'Love of poverty or the foolishness of prosperity', three articles, pp. 74 sqq.; 'What is true poverty?', pp. 153 sqq.

according to the circumstances of the people and should be applicable to existing conditions, and known and understood by the people; representative government and legislation by representatives chosen by the people are entirely in harmony with the spirit and practice of Islām from the beginning, it is even the duty of the nation to aid its ruler by counsel through its chosen representatives, but the method of realizing such representative government has not been defined by the Islāmic Law (*Shari'ah*) but is to be determined according to that which will best promote the ends of justice and the common advantage.¹ It is the duty of every man to love and protect his own country.²

It is a unique spectacle which is presented in the figure of the editor-in-chief of the official organ of the Government, as Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā suggests,³ that of an Azhar shaikh, 'wearer of an Azhar turban', sitting as a member of an autocratic government whose ways are far removed from ways of scholars and men of religion, reviewing and criticizing the acts of officials and directing their efforts towards reform, teaching the newspapers of the country new standards of truthfulness and literary excellence, and seeking to reform the morals and customs of the nation.

But events were conspiring against him to put an end to his work as they had previously ended his teaching activity. His connexion with the *Journal Officiel* ceased in May, 1882, having continued for eighteen months.⁴ By that time the movement which has since been associated with the name of Aḥmad 'Arābī Pasha was well under way and 'Arābī Pasha was at the height of his power. Beginning as a protest of the Egyptian officers of the Egyptian army against preference shown to Turkish-Circassian officers,⁵ the movement

¹ 'Reverence for the laws and regulations of the government necessary for the happiness of the nation', pp. 71 sqq.; 'Laws differ according to circumstances', pp. 167 sqq.; 'National representation and tyranny', pp. 203 sqq., and two other articles on representative government, pp. 210, 213.

² 'Political life', pp. 200 sqq.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 407, 408.

⁴ Michel, p. xxx.

⁵ In January, 1881, the three colonels, 'Arābī, 'Alī Fahmī, and 'Abd al-'Āl presented their protest to 'Othmān Pasha Rifkī, Minister of War, and when an attempt was made to arrest them, the troops made a demonstration on February 1, 1881, and forcibly rescued them.

expanded into a revolt against the privileged position and dominant influence of foreigners in Egypt. 'Arābī, promoted first as colonel in the army, then made Under-Secretary for War, and finally, on February 4, 1882, Minister for War in the Ministry of Maḥmūd Sāmī Pasha, became the popular hero, and the army became the exponent of national aspirations. When the Ministry resigned on May 26, it was deemed advisable to reappoint 'Arābī Pasha, Minister for War. But events developed unfortunately for dreams of national independence. The riots of June 11 in Alexandria were followed by the bombardment of the forts of the harbour by the British fleet on July 11; and with the rout of the Egyptian troops at Tel el-Kebīr on September 13 by British forces, and the capture of 'Arābī Pasha two days later, the Nationalist movement utterly collapsed. The trial and condemnation of the leaders soon followed. 'Arābī Pasha was sentenced to death, but the sentence was commuted to exile to Ceylon.¹

Thus the period of Muḥammad 'Abduh's incumbency as editor-in-chief of *Al-Waḳā'i' al-Miṣriyyah* coincided to a large extent with the duration of the 'Arābī movement. With his position of leadership of the progressive forces of the nation, and his advocacy of representative institutions as not only permissible for a Muslim country like Egypt but also as the ideal to be striven for, and his convictions of the evils of foreign intervention,² it was inevitable that he should take some part in a movement which was, as Lord Cromer characterizes it, 'in some degree unquestionably national'.³

¹ 'Arābī Pasha's own version of his part in events, together with a brief autobiography is found in *Mashāḥīr*, i. 211-32. It contributes little, however, to an understanding of the aims of the movement as a whole. 'Arābī Pasha was permitted to return to Egypt in 1901, and resided at Ḥalwān, near Cairo, until his death in 1911.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 412, 415, points out that Muḥammad 'Abduh was the first one in Egypt, after Jamāl al-Dīn, to advocate a national assembly and constitutional limitation of the powers of the ruler, but this with certain restrictions, to be referred to later, which separated him in principle from the extremists. It is also pointed out, *ibid.*, viii. 412, that both Jamāl and Muḥammad 'Abduh feared foreign intervention from the days of Ismā'il and repeatedly gave warnings of the danger, both in addresses and in writings.

³ *Modern Egypt*, i. 255.

He was in fact, to refer again to Lord Cromer's opinion, 'one of the leading spirits' of the movement.¹

In the earlier stages of the movement, before the military leaders had appealed definitely to force to obtain their ends, he seems to have thought that 'the time had come for a beginning in putting into operation his far-reaching schemes of reform',² and that the movement could be made 'a step in freeing the country from bondage to foreigners'.³ Moreover, the leaders at that time 'seemed to him to be free from personal aims'⁴ and were 'following the course of reform and demanding justice and equality'.⁵ So he threw himself wholeheartedly into the attempt to give direction to the movement and was never sparing in advice to the leaders, even though they were not willing to receive it. He made full use of the opportunity accorded to him as editor of the *Journal Officiel* and as censor and general director of the Press of Egypt, to create a united public opinion and to promote the sounder purposes which he hoped would be accomplished.⁶ The party leaders in the circle about 'Arābī Pasha, on their part, looked to Muḥammad 'Abduh as 'their teacher and the leader of their thoughts, all of them taking in his presence the oath of obedience to their country and its welfare, so much so that he was accounted among the leaders of that revolution, along with 'Abd Allāh Nadīm and the other well-known leaders'.⁷ Public opinion in Egypt at the time of Muḥammad 'Abduh's death, as reflected in the statements of the Press of the day just quoted, was thus a unit in ascribing to him a place of unique influence in connexion with the revolution. This idea

¹ Ibid. ii. 179.

² *Tārīkh*, iii. 156; quotations from newspapers at time of 'Abduh's death. ³ Ibid., p. 82. ⁴ Ibid., p. 156. ⁵ Ibid., p. 53.

⁶ W. S. Blunt in his *Secret History of Egypt* (New York, 1922), p. 117, says that after 'Arābī's demonstration had succeeded in securing the dismissal of Riāḍ Pasha and the granting of a parliament, and the appointment of Cherif Pasha as Prime Minister, 'the Press, under the enlightened censorship of Shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh, freed more than ever from its old channels, spread the news rapidly'. Again, on p. 137, he refers to the moderation of the Press under Muḥammad 'Abduh's censorship.

⁷ *Tārīkh*, iii. 53. On the attitude of the party leaders, cf. a letter from Muḥammad 'Abduh to Jamāl from Bairūt, *Tārīkh*, ii. 528: 'In the beginning of the matter they were the most zealous of all the people towards you and your disciples.'

may be summed up in the statement of more than one newspaper that it was said 'that the followers of 'Arābī never made any plans without seeking his advice'.¹

But while a general position of leadership and influence in the movement was undoubtedly held by Muḥammad 'Abduh, it must be further pointed out in justice to him, as Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā insists repeatedly and with emphasis, that his views differed in many essential points from those of the military leaders, and, as the movement progressed, diverged more and more sharply from theirs, so that he was compelled to criticize many of their actions in his writings and addresses and in conference with them.² He did not approve of their methods, especially of their resort to force, nor did he share the optimism with which they regarded the outcome of their course of action.³ His own position is succinctly stated in the words of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā: 'He was the opponent of the military revolution even though he was a directing spirit to the intellectual movement.'⁴ And at greater length: 'He hated the revolution and was opposed to its leaders, he himself being one of them, because he knew that it would overthrow the work he had begun and every reform the government was accomplishing or had in view, and that it would prepare the way for foreign intervention.'⁵ His outspoken criticism of the military party won from them at times threats of violence if he did not refrain from opposition and cast in his lot wholly with them.⁶

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 10, 120. W. S. Blunt (op. cit., p. 132) refers to a programme of the Nationalist party, setting forth its objectives and plans, which was drawn up by Muḥammad 'Abduh himself and others, was approved by Maḥmūd Sāmi Pasha and 'Arābī Pasha, and sent by Mr. Blunt to Mr. Gladstone.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 413. Cf. also *Mashāhīr*, ii. 281; *Tārīkh*, iii. 120, 169.

³ Cf. Michel, p. xxxiii. W. S. Blunt (op. cit., p. 124) states that 'Muḥammad 'Abduh (and those of his opinion) . . . had disapproved of the immixture of the army in political affairs in September, and although rejoicing at the result, were still to a certain extent holding aloof'.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 467.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 412. Cf. also W. S. Blunt's statement: 'I knew also that Shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh and the rest of my Azhar friends were for other methods than that of violence, and that the reforms they had been so long preaching would, in their opinion, take a lifetime to achieve.' Op. cit., p. 120.

⁶ It is related, *Al-Manār*, viii. 413, that 'Arābī once sent two of his officers to threaten Muḥammad 'Abduh. Of the same tenor is a remark, quoted

This divergence of view is evident in the account of a discussion which Muḥammad 'Abduh had with 'Arābī Pasha and others of the military party in the house of Ṭalbah Pasha. 'Arābī and his followers were of one mind that constitutional government was, without question, the best form of government for a country, and that the time for a change to that kind of government had come in Egypt. 'Abduh opposed this view. He maintained that a beginning must be made in educating the people so that men would be raised up who could perform the duties of representative government with intelligence and firmness. Both the Government and the people must become accustomed gradually to the giving and receiving of advice by means of special councils instituted in the provinces and governorates. It would not be the part of wisdom to give the people what they are not prepared for. To do so would be like making it possible for a minor son to spend all his inheritance before he has attained his majority or been trained to spend money wisely. If the country were ready for participation in the Government, there would be no point in seeking for such participation by force of arms. It is to be feared, he concluded, that this uprising will bring about the occupation of the country by foreigners.¹ On many other occasions he tried to convince 'Arābī that a policy of moderation would, in a few years, win more than they were now seeking.²

On another occasion, when he was called upon to deliver an address before an important meeting of the leaders, he made the subject of his address a demonstration from history of the fact that when revolutions have been successful in limiting the power of autocratic governments and wresting from them rights of representation and equality, such revolutions have proceeded from the middle and lower classes of the nation, and then only after a united public opinion has been developed by education and training. It has never been the case that the wealthy and privileged and governing *Tārīkh*, iii. 20, that when 'Abduh did his best to convince the leaders of the revolution of its untoward consequences, 'they seriously contemplated killing him'.

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 413; *Tārīkh*, i. 146. Cf. Michel, p. xxxiii.

² *Ibid.*, p. 416.

classes have sought to put themselves on an equality with the common people and to share their wealth and power with the lower orders. Addressing his hearers directly, he said: 'Have you upset the custom which God has followed with his creatures, and has the order followed by human society been reversed? Has virtue reached a perfection with you that no one else has ever attained, so that, of your own choice and willingly, with full vision and understanding, you have decided to make the other members of your nation sharers with you in your power and glory, and put yourselves on an equality with beggars, out of love for justice and humanity? Or are you following a course of which you are ignorant, and doing that which you do not understand?'¹

He himself, as before intimated, was strongly in favour of constitutional government, but he believed that such a form of government should be established only with the consent of the ruler and his government, not by rebellion against him; and that such a beginning should be made as would accustom the people to the practices and requirements of representative government, such experiments to be accompanied by teaching and training, until a new generation should be brought to maturity.²

When, however, the course of events made it necessary for him to choose between the Nationalist cause and that of the Khedive, which was in effect that of foreign intervention, he cast in his lot with the Nationalists, although he feared the results of their course of action.³ When, therefore, the cause failed, he was arraigned with the other leaders of the uprising, tried, and sentenced to exile from the country for three years and three months, and was forbidden to return until permission to do so had been given by the Egyptian Government.⁴

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 414, 415.

² *Ibid.*, p. 415.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 416. W. S. Blunt (op. cit., p. 145) states that on the presentation of the joint note of France and England, January 8, 1882, 'the Egyptians for the first time found themselves quite united. Shaikh Muhammad 'Abduh and the cautious Azhar reformers from that point threw in their lot wholly with the advanced party'.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 416. Cf. Michel, p. xxxiv. According to *Mashāhīr*, ii. 282, he was condemned on the charge of having given a *fatwā* (decision according to Islāmic Law) in favour of the deposition of the Khedive Tawfīk Pasha. Cf. also, the same statement in *Tārikh*, iii. 100, probably

The trial took place in September, 1882;¹ and before the end of that year he had left Egypt, directing his steps towards Syria, that he might find there a home and a refuge until he might be permitted to return again to his own country.

Thus ended, in failure and bitter disappointment, his first efforts for the uplift of his country; and the bitterness was further increased by the fact that some of his friends on whom he had placed dependence, turned against him during the trial and sought to implicate him more deeply in the events which had just passed. But the high hopes with which he had begun his work were not entirely quenched. 'But I say to you,' he wrote to a friend from prison during the course of the trial, after having mentioned the false charges brought against him, 'these distressing events will sometime be forgotten, and this national honour will sometime be restored. But if the character of this land, because of its sordidness, does not permit that it should have any part in this restoration, then let the honour return to lands that are better. And as for me, let me attract to nobility my friends and any who feel themselves attracted by it. All this, in case I live and my bodily health permits; I ask nothing else beyond these two things except the assistance of God, whom some of the people know and whom some deny.'²

Agitator and Lecturer: Life in Exile, 1882-8.

It was the intention of Muhammad 'Abduh when he left Egypt at the end of 1882 to take up his abode in Syria until such time as he should be permitted to return to Egypt.³ But after a residence of about a year in Bairūt he received

quoted from the former. The *Journal du Caire* (ibid., p. 169) varies the statement by saying that he 'published' such a *fatwā*. No specific charges are mentioned by Muhammad Rashīd Riḍā in his earlier account. In his later work, *Tārīkh*, i. 266, he says that, because of charges of which he was not guilty, brought against him by some of his former friends he was tried, along with the military leaders, on the charge of rebellion.

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 169.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 526. This portion of the letter is quoted also in *Al-Manār*, viii. 454, and in *Tārīkh*, i. 267 sqq.

³ Ibid., pp. 528, 529, in a letter from Bairūt to Jamāl, then in Paris; the letter is not dated, but was evidently written not long after Muhammad 'Abduh had left Egypt.

an invitation from Jamāl al-Dīn, who had been in Paris from the beginning of the year 1883, to join him there to work on behalf of what he called 'the Egyptian question'.¹ Early in 1884, 'Abduh therefore left Bairūt and joined his former teacher in Paris. There he remained about ten months, except for a brief visit or two to England for conference with British high officials concerning affairs in Egypt and the Sudan, then in a critical state because of the Mahdī uprising.² During this period the two friends were engaged in promoting the affairs of the secret organization, 'Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah', which they had founded to arouse and unite public opinion in all Muslim countries, and in editing the publication of the same name which served to propagate their views.³ When the publication was suppressed, the two separated, Jamāl going to Russia, and Muḥammad 'Abduh going to Tunis in the latter part of 1884, where he remained for a short time, and then travelled incognito in a number of other countries, strengthening the organization of the society they had founded.⁴

The success which attended the publication of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, despite its brief career, may be understood from a brief survey of the ideas which recurred most frequently in its pages. Its appeals to all Muslim peoples, whose present decadence it laments, to unite on the basis of their common faith, in order to resist the aggressions of their own rulers and those of foreign countries of another faith, and restore the lost glories of a united and victorious Islām, were well calculated to arouse the sympathies of all Muslims who deplored the present divided and backward state of Muslim nations. Moreover, its articles were written in Arabic of unusual

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 455.

² Cf. above, p. 10. An account of an interview which Muḥammad 'Abduh had with Lord Hartington, Secretary of State for War, is given in *Al-Manār*, viii. 458-61, reproduced from an article which appeared at the time in *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*.

³ Cf. above, p. 9.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 462. Michel, p. xxxv. *Tārīkh*, i. 380 sqq. In the latter account it is clearly stated that Muḥammad 'Abduh entered Egypt in disguise, in order to make preparations for proceeding to the Sudan, where he expected to be joined later by Jamāl al-Dīn if the preparatory steps were successfully completed. It was their purpose to secretly organize the forces of the Mahdī as a means of freeing Egypt from the Occupation.

excellence and eloquence. The following is a summary of its principal ideas.¹

The religion of Islām is the one bond which unites Muslims of all countries and obliterates all traces of race or nationality. Its Divine Law (*Shari'ah*) regulates in detail the rights and duties of all, both ruler and subjects, and removes all racial distinctions and occasion for competition within the body of Islām. Any Muslim ruler can win distinction and gain great influence in the Muslim world by his devotion to the *Shari'ah*. Islām does not concern itself only with the future life, as do other religions, but deals also sufficiently with this present life, thus providing for what the *Shari'ah* calls 'the happiness of the two Abodes', that is, this world and the Hereafter.²

The Muslim peoples were once united under one glorious empire, and their achievements in learning and philosophy and all the sciences are still the boast of all Muslims.³ It is a duty incumbent upon all Muslims to aid in maintaining the authority of Islām and Islāmic rule over all lands that have once been Muslim; and they are not permitted under any circumstances to be peaceable and conciliatory towards any who contend the mastery with them, until they obtain complete authority without sharing it with any one else.⁴ Yet this unity has been lost through the ambitions and greed of aggrandizement of Muslim rulers; and the downfall of Muslim nations has been brought about by the lust of the rulers for dainties and luxuries, for titles and honours, even as we see to-day.⁵ The bonds binding Muslims together began to fall apart when the 'Abbāssid Caliphs became content to possess the title of Caliph, and ceased to be scholars and trained in religious matters and in the exercise of 'Ijtihād', as were the first four Caliphs, 'the Rightly Guided Caliphs'. Hence from the beginning of the third century of the Hijrah, sects and divisions multiplied, and the Caliphate itself became divided.⁶ To-day we see Muslim rulers giving a free hand to foreigners to carry on the affairs of their states and even of their own houses, and fastening foreign rule upon their own necks.⁷ Europeans, greedy for Muslim lands, seek

¹ Cf. *Beiträge*, xiii. 92-4.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 231-5, 'Race and the Religion of Islām', and frequently.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 279-85, 'Islāmic Unity', and elsewhere.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 250 sqq., 'The Decadence and Inactivity of Muslims'; pp. 285 sqq., 'Unity and Mastery'; pp. 244 sqq., 'Christendom and Islām and their Respective Peoples', and elsewhere.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 253, 'Decadence and Inactivity of Muslims'.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 283, 'Islāmic Unity'.

to destroy their religious unity and thus take advantage of the inner discords of Islām.¹ Foreigners, employed by Muslim governments, since they belong neither to the religion nor to the state, are not concerned for the honour of the state and its welfare, but look only for their pay and think only of their own interests.² But the Muslim nations to-day are not concerned about helping one another. This is because they are ignorant of one another's state. The learned men, who should have tried to strengthen the bonds of unity by making the mosques and schools centres for the creation of a spirit of unity, have neglected this method that was within their reach, for they had no communication with the learned men of other Muslim countries and so were ignorant of their condition; and, further, they had been corrupted by their rulers.³

The cure for these ills of Muslim countries is not to be found in multiplication of newspapers—for these have little influence; not in introduction of schools modelled after those of Europe—for these can be used, together with the sciences they teach, to foster foreign influence; nor in European education and imitation of foreign customs—for imitation has only succeeded in quenching the spirit of the people and drawing down upon these countries the power of the foreigners whom they imitate. The only cure for these nations is to return to the rules of their religion and the practice of its requirements according to what it was in the beginning, in the days of the early Caliphs.⁴ 'If they rouse themselves to their present affairs and set their feet in the way of success and make the principles of their true religion their one concern, then they cannot fail thereafter of reaching in their progress the limit of human perfection.'⁵ Furthermore, Muslims must learn to help one another and stand united against all foes. 'I do not seek in saying this that the supreme ruler over all should be one person, for this perhaps would be difficult; but I do urge that the supreme authority over all should be the Qur'ān, and the aspect in which they are united should be their religion, and that every ruler, each in his own state, put forth every effort for the protection of others as far as possible. For his own life stands by the life of the others,

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 260, 'Fanaticism'.

² *Ibid.*, p. 299, 'Men of the State and Courtiers of the Kingdom'.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 251, 252, 254, 'Decadence and Inactivity of Muslims', p. 282; 'Islamic Unity'; p. 310, 'Appeal to Persians for Union with Afghanistan'.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 235 sqq., 'The Past of the Muslim Community, its Present and the Remedy for its Ills'; p. 234, 'Race and the Religion of Islām'.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 243, 'The Past of the Muslim Community, &c.'

and his continued existence by theirs.¹ When any Muslim country is under the sway of a tyrannical ruler, whose will is law and whose course of action is bringing disaster to the country, it is the right of the people to free themselves from such a ruler, lest the whole Islāmic Community become corrupted by his example.²

It will appear, even from the summary given above, that the tone and spirit of the journal was much more radical and aggressive than that of the ideas advocated by Muḥammad 'Abduh during his previous editorial experience in Egypt. It is not surprising that autocratic rulers in Muslim countries, and officials of governments having interests in these lands, should view with concern its continued publication and should eventually suppress it. One reason which may be advanced for its uncompromising aims and intransigent tone, is the outcome of recent affairs in Egypt and the fact that both Muḥammad 'Abduh and Jamāl had been banished from Egypt under the combined influence of foreign intervention and, as they thought, the too complacent assent of the Muslim ruler. But a more fundamental reason is to be seen in the fact that Muḥammad 'Abduh is throughout the period of this political agitation, following the leadership of Jamāl al-Dīn, who was by nature a revolutionist, while he himself believed in the quieter but slower method of reform and education.³ It is true that he had, according to the statement of W. S. Blunt, at one time approved assassination as a means of freeing Egypt from a troublesome ruler, but at that time, also, Jamāl's influence had been supreme, since he had not yet been banished from Egypt.⁴ It is likewise true that about two years after the failure of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah* and his final separation from Jamāl, his Pan-Islāmic sympathies

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 284, 'Islāmic Unity'; pp. 285 sqq., 'Unity and Mastery'. While united political rule for all Muslim countries, in so far as appears in the articles of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah* which have been preserved by Muḥammad Rashid Riḍa, is not advocated, as may be judged from the example above, yet elsewhere Muḥammad 'Abduh insists upon the duty of supporting the Ottoman Caliphate as the protector and defender of Islām. 'Proposals on Reform and Religious Instruction', in *Tārīkh*, ii. 339, also 'Proposals on Reform in Syria', *ibid.*, p. 354.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 231, 232, 'The Community and the Sway of a Tyrannical Ruler'. This article seems particularly to represent Jamāl's sentiments.

³ Cf. above, p. 14, n. 2.

⁴ Cf. above, p. 14, n. 2.

strongly appear in two communications on the subject of reform which he addressed, one to the Shaikh al-Islām at Constantinople and the other to the Wālī of Bairūt. The preservation of the Ottoman Empire he holds to be the third article of belief, after belief in God and in His prophet, because it alone protects the religion of Islām and guarantees the existence of its domains. 'This is our belief, Praise be to God; in it we live and in it we will die.' But it is a mistake to suppose that regard for the Islāmic Caliphate arises from any other sentiment than that due to their religion; it does not come from the name of 'the fatherland' or 'the welfare of the country' or 'any other such high-sounding phrases'.¹ His distrust of and aversion to foreign influence is also evident in his references to 'the foreign devils' from France, England, Germany, and America, who have established foreign schools in Muslim countries in their endeavour to subvert Muslim beliefs and win the sympathies of the people towards the countries which they represent.²

Yet a consideration of his career as a whole, and of the general trend of his writings, is convincing as to the fact that, fundamentally, Muḥammad 'Abduh was a reformer who depended more upon methods of reform and education than upon agitation and revolution. If, during the latter stages of the 'Arābī movement, he was actively identified with the revolutionists, it was because, as has been said, he was drawn by force of circumstances into acceptance of methods which he did not approve. So, too, his participation with Jamāl in political agitation was dictated by considerations of policy and aims rather than by entire approval of method. He felt that the same ends could be attained more surely, if more slowly, by quieter means. 'His experience and that of his

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 339.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 340, 359, 362. Such distrust of foreign influence is not unknown among the Christians of the East, also. It is possible to discover in the reaction of the East against foreign domination to-day, similarity to the anti-Hellenism and the anti-Romanism which grew steadily from the early days of the Roman Empire (perhaps from a considerably earlier time). The reaction manifested itself, not only in uprisings, but also in the development of indigenous types in architecture and other arts, in the sciences, in religious divisions, &c. This spirit of revolt was one of the contributing factors in the early spread of Islām.

master with Tawfiḳ Pasha in Egypt', states Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, 'had weakened his hope of political reform, and had turned his attention to general public reform by means of training and education.'¹ He therefore expressed to Jamāl al-Dīn in Europe, his belief that this political method would not result in any good, for the establishment of a just and reformed Muslim government did not depend alone on the removal of the hindrances occasioned by foreigners. It would be better, he thought, if they, too, would devote themselves to training men according to their own ideals, in some quiet spot remote from political influences, and these men, in turn, would go out to different countries to train others. Thus at no remote date they would have a considerable force of agents at work. 'It is men', he said, 'who will accomplish everything.'² But this idea Jamāl overruled, holding that they must continue in the course they had begun until they had completed their work or had failed.

It was doubtless to the 'Arābī period, also, that he refers in his autobiography, when he says that at one time he entertained the purpose, as one of the chief aims of his life, of championing the rights of the Egyptian people as against their ruler, teaching them that while they owed him obedience, they also possessed certain rights, among them that of having their wishes so represented to the sovereign, that he would be held in check when inclined to go astray. Some of his aims, he continues, he had realized approximately; 'but the matter of the government and the governed I abandoned to the decision of fate, and to the hand of God thereafter to arrange. For I had learned that it is a fruit which the nations gather from plantings which they themselves plant and nourish through long years. It is this planting which requires to be

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 457. *Mashāhīr*, i. 285, says that Jamāl and Muḥammad 'Abduh were one in aim, namely, to unite Islām and ameliorate its condition, but they differed in regard to the means to that end. Jamāl hoped by political means to unite all Muslim countries under one Islāmic government. But Muḥammad 'Abduh had learned that political methods would not accomplish the desired results and therefore strove for this end by means of education and purification of religion and preparation of the Muslim nations to take their place among the nations of the world and share in their progress. Moreover, Jamāl's nervous energy demanded speedier results.

² *Ibid.*, p. 457.

and the only remedy to be found is in improving this instruction. He divides the people into three classes, according to occupation and the degree of education which they have received or require. He then proposes a course of instruction for each class, graded according to the requirements of each. He offers these suggestions for the consideration of the educational commission which had been appointed by the Sultān to investigate the state of education in the Empire.¹ In the second paper, 'Proposals on Reform in Syria', which he presented to the Wālī (governor) of Bairūt, he surveys the conditions of all the classes and sects represented in the population of the three provinces of Syria, namely, the Lebanons, Bairūt, and Syria, with respect to the state of religion and education among them and their political affiliations and sympathies, points out the dangers to be anticipated from foreign schools, and suggests the founding of suitable schools and increase of religious education.²

Finally, after a residence of about three and a half years in Bairūt, pardon was secured for him from the Khedive Tawfīk Pasha through the mediation of a number of influential persons, among them Lord Cromer,³ and in the latter part of 1888⁴ he returned to Egypt. He had married a second time in Bairūt, his first wife having died.⁵ During the interim of six years since he had left Egypt, he had travelled in several European countries and was an eager and interested observer of that Western civilization with which he had first become acquainted through his studies of modern works and which he had much desired to see at first-hand.⁶ He travelled also

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 338–53.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 354–63. For Horten on these proposals, cf. *Beiträge*, xiii. 94, 95.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 467. Cf. Lord Cromer's statement, 'under British pressure he was pardoned'. *Modern Egypt*, ii. 179.

⁴ According to the Muslim dating, A.H. 1306, *Al-Manār*, viii. 465.

⁵ *Tārīkh*, iii. 152, especially footnote, also pp. 154, 169. Cf. Michel, p. xxxvi.

⁶ Cf. *Tārīkh*, iii. 84: 'At Oxford and Cambridge one finds him observing how nations rise to greatness.' In the account which he contributed to *Al-Manār* (vols. vi and vii) of his visit to Palermo and other parts of Sicily, *en route* from Tunis and Algeria to Bairūt, he takes occasion to intersperse many observations on social, literary and religious reforms necessary in Muslim lands, which were suggested to him by scenes and conditions which he was witnessing. *Tārīkh* ii. 421–58.

in many Muslim lands and discovered the sources of Muslim weakness and received impressions which later travels only tended to confirm.¹ Thus he was himself, personally, the gainer by this enforced absence from his country, particularly in those respects which fitted him for a more influential leadership in that field of reform which he had chosen for his own. 'The exile', says Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, 'was a misfortune and a hardship to all those who were exiled, except to the Imām (Muḥammad 'Abduh); but to him it was a mercy and a blessing, a contribution to the completeness of his learning and of his education, and a means to the dissemination of his learning in many lands.'²

So stimulating and valuable did he himself find his travels in Europe, which circumstances not of his own planning had made possible the first time, that in later years he returned to Europe again and again, whenever he felt the need, as he said, 'of renewing his soul'.³ 'I never once went to Europe', he says further, 'that there was not renewed within me hope of the change of the present state of Muslims to something better.' And although these hopes became weakened when he returned to his own country because of the magnitude of the difficulties which he encountered and the obstinacy, indifference and supineness of his own people: 'Yet', he continues, 'whenever I returned to Europe and remained there a month or two, these hopes came back to me, and the attainment of that which I had been accounting impossible seemed easy to me'.⁴ It was thus, under the influence of many stimulating impressions gathered from his extended period of residence abroad, that he returned to Egypt to enter upon the culminating period of his service to his religion and to his country.

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 465.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 466.

² *Ibid.*, p. 416.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 466.

CHAPTER IV

MUHAMMAD 'ABDUH: BIOGRAPHY (*cont.*)

1888-1905: Culmination of Career.

Reformer and Public Servant.

WHEN Muḥammad 'Abduh returned to Egypt, he found himself honoured and esteemed on every hand by the Egyptian people, as one who had attempted much and endured much on behalf of Egyptian freedom and the rehabilitation of all Muslim peoples.¹ This confidence he justified to the highest degree in the years which followed. He was entrusted, one after another, with the most responsible and influential positions, and was constantly engaged in a great variety of important activities. He did not always succeed in winning universal approval: his efforts to effect reforms where strongly entrenched interests held the field made this impossible; yet not even his opponents could question the disinterestedness of his motives and the purity of his zeal for religion and country. The years from his return until his death thus form the period of his greatest activity and of his most important contributions to Egypt and to Islām, despite the lack of any outstanding events, such as characterized the preceding periods.² The statement which was made concerning him, after his death, may fairly be taken as a characterization of his work throughout the whole period: 'No great work was completed in Egypt that his hand was not in it before any other hand, and his effort before any other effort.'³

In the Native Tribunals.

The Khedive, Tawfīk Pasha, after having been prevailed upon to pardon him, appointed him a 'Qāḍī' (judge) in the Courts of First Instance of the Native Tribunals (*Al-Maḥākīm al-Ahliyyah al-Ibtidā'īyyah*).⁴ The latter wished to return to

¹ Cf. *Beiträge*, xiii. 92.

² Cf. Michel, p. xxxvi.

³ *Tārīkh*, iii. 10, 79. The same sentiment is expressed in *Mashāḥir*, i. 283.

⁴ *Ibid.*, iii. 21. Four judicial systems exist side by side in Egypt. First, the Consular Courts, which have jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases

his teaching in the Dār al'Ulūm, for he felt that teaching was his proper sphere, in which already he had made trial of himself and had experienced some success. But the Khedive was not willing to change the appointment, for he feared the influence of his political views upon the students.¹ Since he could not better the matter, 'Abduh accepted the appointment and served, first in Benha, then in Zagazig, and then in Cairo.² Two years later, A.H. 1308 (A.D. 1890), he was appointed Consultative Member of the Court of Appeal (*Maḥkamat al-Isti'nāf*) in Cairo.³

During his career on the bench, Muḥammad 'Abduh sought with consistency of aim to promote the ends of justice and equity, and where possible to resolve the difficulties of

involving subjects of the foreign powers, fifteen in number, which are party to the Capitulations. Second, the Mixed Tribunals, for all cases involving Egyptian subjects and foreigners. Third, the 'Maḥkamahs' (*al-Maḥākīm al-Shar'iyyah*), or Courts of the Qādis, which have jurisdiction over all Egyptian subjects (Muslims) in matters of personal status, such as marriage, inheritance, guardianship, &c., rendering their decisions on the basis of the Shari'ah, or Sacred Law of Islām. Fourth, the Native Tribunals (*Al-Maḥākīm al-Ahliyyah*). These, instituted in 1883, 'deal with civil cases in which both parties are Ottoman subjects, and with all criminal cases in which an Ottoman subject is the accused party'. Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, ii. 515. (Since the termination of the British Protectorate and the recognition of Egypt as an independent kingdom in February, 1922, Egyptians are no longer Ottoman subjects.) These courts administer a jurisprudence modelled on that of the French Code. These were modified and simplified in 1891 and again in 1904, more important modifications were effected. The judges are both Egyptian and foreign. *Vide Enc. Britt.*, art. 'Egypt — Justice'. The statement of Horten (*Beiträge*, xiii. 101, n. 3.) that these courts were first established at the time that Muḥammad 'Abduh was appointed to them is therefore not exact. The statement of *Tārīkh*, iii. 246, on which he depends, properly reads, 'By that time the Ahliyyah Courts had been established, and Muḥammad 'Abduh was appointed a Judge of the First Instance in them,' &c.

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 467. Muḥammad 'Abduh preferred teaching, although he realized that the path of preferment lay open to him in the judicial career, while none could be expected in a career as a teacher. Cf. also *Tārīkh*, iii. 242.

² *Tārīkh*, iii. 21, 121, 126, 152, 170, 242, 246.

³ *Ibid.*, iii. 21, 121, 162, 170. Cf. Michel, p. xxxvi. Horten (*Beiträge*, xiii. 101) gives 1892 as the date of his appointment as judge, on the authority of the *Egyptian Gazette* (*Tārīkh*, iii. 152) which says that he was pardoned and appointed that year. But this is much too late a date for his return to Egypt, at which time his pardon and appointment took place. Likewise, the date which Horten assigns for his appointment to the Court of Appeal, 1896, is also too late.

litigation by compromise and reconciliation. To accomplish these ends, he applied the law with an independence of judgement in interpretation and a freedom from subservient regard for legal forms that led sometimes to criticisms from the more literally minded; he even at times purposely contravened the law, as when he imprisoned witnesses whose testimony was manifestly perjured.¹ He sought also to make the exercise of his office effective in awakening and educating the public conscience, particularly with regard to the two evils of perjury in court and prostitution.² His ability in deciding cases, and his uncanny insight in discerning between the innocent and those rightly suspected, became matters of common remark.³

Reforms in the Azhar.

Meanwhile the purpose which he had conceived, even in his student days, after he had begun to associate with Jamāl al-Dīn,⁴ of effecting reforms in conditions prevailing in Al-Azhar, continued to grow in his mind. Since the Azhar is to-day the chief seat of learning in Egypt and in the entire Muslim world, he believed that, if the Azhar were reformed,

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 468, 469; *Tārīkh*, iii. 242. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā calls him a 'Kāfī mujtahid' not a 'muḥallid', i.e. one who arrives at an independent opinion by his own handling of the original sources on which such an opinion may be based, and does not simply confine himself within the limits of an authoritative deliverance, handed down from masters of former generations. In orthodox Islām, the right of 'ijtihād' (independent opinion) in matters of law and religion, belonged only to the great masters of the early generations and has consequently not existed since the third century A.H. Muḥammad 'Abduh and his followers have, however, claimed this right for the present generation, as for every other, so that Islām, and particularly its legal system, may be adapted to present-day requirements. Since the law code administered by the Native Tribunals was not Islāmic Law pure and simple, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā can only have intended that Muḥammad 'Abduh exhibited the same spirit in dealing with this code as in dealing with Islāmic Law. He mentions cases involving interest (which is not legal according to Islāmic Law), as among those in which he showed independence of treatment. The principle which he enunciated at one time, in defence of his decisions, was that the regulations of the law were originated for the ends of justice and not justice for the ends of the law.

² It is said that in some places where he held office (Zagazig is mentioned particularly), he almost succeeded in cleansing the city of these evils during his term of office. *Al-Manār*, viii. 469.

³ An anecdote illustrating his reputation is given in *Tārīkh*, iii. 54.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 471.

Islām would be reformed.¹ If the methods of administration and teaching then in vogue could be improved, and its curriculum widened to include some of the modern sciences so that the Azhar might more nearly resemble a European university,² and still more important, if the character of Islām itself could be modernized and reformed within this centre and stronghold of the religious sciences, it might reasonably be expected that the power and prestige of the Azhar would carry these reforms throughout the whole of Egypt and even to other Muslim countries. Thus the Azhar would become a 'lighthouse' and means of guidance to all the Muslim world.³ In any case it was impossible for it to continue in its present state in this day and age. It must either, he was persuaded, be given new life or fall into complete decay.⁴

He had made some tentative attempts at reform during his student days,⁵ and again, after his return from exile, he had approached Shaikh Muḥammad al-Anbābī, then rector of the Azhar, with regard to introducing certain studies into the curriculum.⁶ From the opposition which he had encountered in these attempts he had learned that he could hope to accomplish nothing without the help of the Khedive, and this help Tawfiḳ Pasha was not willing to give.⁷ When 'Abbās Ḥilmī came to the throne as 'Abbās II in 1892, upon the death of his father, Tawfiḳ Pasha, Muḥammad 'Abduh laid his plans for reform of the Azhar before the young Khedive in the hope of winning his favour,⁸ and succeeded in securing the enactment of a preliminary regulation whereby, on the seventeenth of Rajab, A.H. 1312 (January 15, 1895),⁹ an Administrative Committee for the Azhar was

¹ *Mashāḥir*, i. 286; *Al-Manār*, viii. 470.

² *Tārīkh*, iii. 137. Cf. also *Al-Manār*, viii. 895: 'His hope of reform was bound up in the Azhar.' It was his intention to widen the range of studies so that specialized training could be given to certain classes who would become expert in their particular field, beginning with *kādīs* for the 'Maḥkamahs', then missionaries or propagandists, and others for preaching in the mosques and for public exhortation. ³ *Tārīkh*, iii. 24, 157, 242, 258.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 471.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 400, 471.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 471. He suggested the introduction of the *Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldūn*.

⁷ *Tārīkh*, iii. 166. The orthodox opposed the introduction of modern sciences on the ground that they were not in harmony with the teachings of Islām. *Tārīkh*, iii. 138. ⁸ *Al-Manār*, viii. 472. ⁹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 250.

appointed, to consist of the most important shaikhs of the university, representing the four orthodox rites or schools of canon law. Muḥammad 'Abduh and his friend, Shaikh 'Abd al-Karīm Salmān, were made members of this Committee to represent the Government, the Shaikh al-Azhar and the Committee itself having nothing to say about their choice.¹ From the first, Muḥammad 'Abduh was the moving spirit in this Committee.

Although he thus had behind him the favour of the Khedive and the influence of the Government in a measure, he wished that the reforms which he hoped to introduce might carry the consent and approval of the teachers (the shaikhs or 'Ulamā) of the Azhar. For this reason he wisely began by taking measures to increase their salaries.² While some few

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 472. There had been many complaints on the part of the shaikhs regarding the administration of Shaikh Muḥammad al-Anbābī, who was then ill. Accordingly in 1312 (latter part of 1894), a month before the appointment of the Administrative Committee, Shaikh Ḥassūnah al-Nawāwī was appointed his deputy, after he had given assurances that he would establish order and co-operate with Muḥammad 'Abduh in reform. Shortly afterwards (1313/1895) Al-Anbābī was persuaded to resign and Shaikh Ḥassūnah took his place. *Al-Manār*, viii. 472, 473. The latter had taught in government schools and knew something of their order and discipline. It was expected that his appointment would help to secure improvement in instruction in the Azhar. He was removed, however (1899, Vollers, *Enc. Islām*, art. 'Azhar'), and was followed by 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḳuṭb, who died very soon thereafter. The Khedive then chose Shaikh Salīm al-Bishrī for the office, but later, without consulting his government, removed him and appointed, by agreement with the Government, however, Shaikh Al-Sayyid 'Alī al-Biblāwī in his stead. This was in 1320/1902, (*Al-Manār*, viii. 957). In March, 1905, Shaikh Al-Biblāwī resigned and was succeeded by Shaikh 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sharbīnī. This account of the frequent changes in the rectorship, given in *Al-Manār*, viii. 76, 77, should be compared with the list given by Vollers (cf. above). The latter gives the length of Salīm al-Bishrī's tenure as from 1899 to 1905 and makes no mention of 'Alī al-Biblāwī. In regard to the latter, cf. also a reference of *Tārīkh*, iii. 39, to the fact that two former rectors, Shaikh Ḥassūnah al-Nawāwī and Shaikh 'Alī al-Biblāwī, were present in the funeral procession of Muḥammad 'Abduh, while the present rector, Shaikh Al-Sharbīnī was absent, pleading illness. Cf. also in a letter of Shaikh Ibrāhīm Bey al-Hilbāwī to 'Abd al Karīm Salmān, a reference to the resignation of Shaikh 'Alī al-Biblāwī, *Tārīkh*, iii. 278. Cf. also the changes in office as given in *Tārīkh*, iii. 167, and summary in *Tārīkh*, i. 493, 494. Muḥammad 'Abduh was never rector (although Goldziher to the contrary, *Koranauslegung*, p. 321.)

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 473-5. The account of reforms in the Azhar is there given in summary form. Full details are supplied in the memorial address of Shaikh Aḥmad Abū Khaṭwah, *Tārīkh*, iii. 250 sqq. Horten (*Beiträge*,

of the teachers were receiving as much as six hundred piastres per month or more, others were receiving as little as sixteen piastres and the majority nothing at all, having to depend upon such fees as they could extract from their students and upon outside employment.¹ Muḥammad 'Abduh secured a grant of 1,000 pounds from the State treasury, with promise of more, on condition that this amount be spent according to a fixed plan and not at the discretion of the Shaikh al-Azhar, as such sums had formerly been spent, and on condition that the improvement made justified further increase. This gave him ground and justification for assigning salaries according to a graded classification of the teachers, so that each one would know the amount he was to receive regularly each month, without having to depend upon the whim or favouritism of the Shaikh al-Azhar. Further, he formulated regulations governing the assignment of the 'robes of honour' (*kasāwī al-tashrif*) which, according to the practice of the Middle Ages, were assigned to be worn on certain occasions as a mark of honour and recognition. Assignment was placed upon the basis of merit, due consideration being given, among other things, to length of service, whereas formerly this matter had been entirely in the hands of the Shaikh al-Azhar.

He also made a thorough investigation of the living conditions of the students and found them crowded and unsanitary, and the students themselves existing on insufficient allowances of bread which were made to the students according to long-established custom. He secured an increase in the number of daily loaves, so that instead of 5,000 loaves the number eventually reached 15,000. He secured additional appropriation from the Wakfs Administration through the influence of the Khedive, and also reorganized the trust funds

xiii. 106-12) reproduces these details. Michel's summary (Introd., pp. xxxvii, xxxviii) is brief and concise. *Al-Manār* published in 1905 a report of the reforms attempted under the title 'Actions of the Administrative Committee of the Azhar, 1895-1905' ('*A'māl majlis idārat al-Azhar*, 1312-22), that is, from the time of the appointment of the Committee until Muḥammad 'Abduh's resignation from it. Cf. Vollers's estimate of this report in *Enc. Islām*, art. 'Azhar'. For a very full, detailed account of the situation which then existed in the Azhar, the reforms which were attempted, and the reactionary influences and political intrigues which were opposed to the success of these reforms, see *Tārīkh*, i. 425-600. ¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 250.

and pious endowments of the Azhar, which were in hopeless confusion. In this manner the income was increased from about 4,000 pounds yearly to 14,750.¹ A plan for regulating the distribution of the daily allowance of loaves, which had become the source of private emolument to various shaikhs and officials and an unending cause of disputes and quarrels, was, however, shelved by the Administrative Committee. The share of the trust funds which formerly was allotted to the children of deceased teachers in the Azhar without any attached condition, was now limited by the condition that the children should be preparing themselves by study to succeed their fathers as teachers.² He secured additional dormitories for the students, renewed the furniture and equipment, improved the sanitary arrangements, installed a system of running water, especially that the ritual ablutions might be performed in more sanitary fashion, and installed petroleum lights instead of the vegetable-oil lights formerly in use. A physician was placed in charge of the medical inspection of the students, a dispensary was fitted up within the Azhar where medicines were provided to the students free of charge, and later a hospital was provided.

The administrative affairs of the university likewise received attention. Rooms were set aside in an accessible part of the buildings for the administrative offices, and a sufficient number of clerks and attendants employed to aid the Shaikh al-Azhar in carrying out the duties of the reorganized system of administration. Formerly the Shaikh al-Azhar conducted

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 251. The figures for allowances and income include the affiliated mosque schools of Tanṭā, Dassiūk, Damiatta, and Alexandria. The figures are evidently corrected to the time of Muḥammad 'Abduh's resignation in 1905. Comparison may be made with those given in Vollers's article already referred to, which differ somewhat from the above. In regard to attendance, the official report for 1892, published shortly after the accession of 'Abbās II, records 178 teachers and 8,437 students; the report for 1901-2 gives 251 teachers and 10,403 students. The numbers, which fluctuate considerably from year to year, include the affiliated schools, as in the case of income and allowances.

² *Tārīkh*, iii. 254. When some of those who had formerly been profiting from this source had to give it up because they did not wish to prepare to teach, Muḥammad 'Abduh personally interested himself in securing from various sources a maintenance fund for them, to which he himself contributed liberally.

his administrative duties from his own home, to which teachers and students were required to go on matters which needed his attention, while the greater part of the routine affairs were relinquished to the oversight of his one secretary, who, consequently, exercised somewhat arbitrary powers. The curriculum was also the subject of extended consideration. That any changes introduced might secure the approval of the majority of the teachers, a committee of more than thirty of the leading shaikhs was charged with the task of studying the whole matter of the studies already taught and those that should be introduced, and presenting its recommendations to the Administrative Committee. Those subjects which were regarded as fundamental and to be studied for their own sake were indicated, and likewise those that were to be studied as a means to the acquirement of the former.¹ To the latter subjects were added arithmetic, algebra, history of Islām, composition, and other grammatical studies, and the elements of geometry and geography. To secure the diploma of 'ālīm' (scholar, one fitted to teach) it was required that the student should pass an examination in all the first group of subjects and some of the second, including arithmetic and algebra. It was further specified that, during his first four years, the student should not be required to study extensive glosses and commentaries, but should devote himself to acquiring a knowledge of the essentials of the religious sciences by simple and easy methods and likewise concern himself with his development in those moral characteristics approved by the Shari'ah.

A series of supplementary regulations were also enacted by the Administrative Committee in consultation with the teachers, some of these affecting the methods of teaching, some the conduct of the teachers, and some that of the students and their relation to one another and to the teachers. The number and extent of the frequent holidays and recesses were reduced, so that the length of the actual sessions was increased from four months of the year to eight. It was found that under the new arrangements, the teachers and students applied themselves with diligence to their tasks. The number

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 254. Cf. above, pp. 29, 30.

of students who had previously presented themselves for examination had not been more than six in any one year, and on an average only about three in a year. But after the new order was introduced the number of those examined rose to ninety-five, of whom about a third were passed. It had been feared by many of the shaikhs that the modern studies newly introduced would attract the greater part of the students' attention, to the detriment of the ancient subjects hitherto studied exclusively. Muḥammad 'Abduh devised a test to show that a larger percentage of students who were examined in both ancient and modern subjects were successful than of those who had studied only the ancient.¹

Investigation had revealed the fact that the library of the university was in a deplorable state of neglect and disuse and was, in fact, almost non-existent. Such volumes as existed were scattered among the various 'riwāks',² and were many of them in dilapidated condition. Many valuable works had found their way into the hands of European scholars, and very many more had been sold at merely nominal prices to booksellers. From their various hiding-places these scattered books were carried in bags and baskets to the place set aside for a library, and were there arranged and classified. The libraries of the most important 'riwāks' were left where they were, but were also arranged and classified and placed under proper care. Libraries were also instituted in the provincial mosque schools in Ṭanṭā, Dassūḳ, Damiaṭṭa, and Alexandria, which were now affiliated with the Azhar for purposes of administration and came under the same rules and regulations, thus sharing in the reforms which were being introduced into the central school. Muḥammad 'Abduh hoped thus to make the Azhar the centre of a reform movement and an intellectual revival for the whole country. He himself returned to teaching in the Azhar, delivering lectures on theology, Ḳur'ān interpretation, rhetoric and logic.³ Mention

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 256.

² 'Riwāk', i.e. loggia, or portico, strictly speaking the space between two pillars. Each considerable division of students, whether of nationality or sect, has its own special 'riwāk', as the 'riwāk of the Syrians' the 'riwāk of the Hanbalites', &c.

³ The lectures which he delivered in theology had been developed from

should be made, finally, of the emphasis which he placed continually upon the necessity of a revival of the Arabic language and a return to the pure classical standards. This he did, not only by his use of it in his own lectures, addresses and conversations in the Azhar and elsewhere, but also by securing from the Wakfs Administration a grant to provide a teacher who should teach it in its purity in the Azhar.¹

Considerable attention has been given here to these attempted reforms in the Azhar, because of the importance which they assumed in the mind of Muḥammad 'Abduh, the hopes which he built upon them for a general reform of Islām, and the efforts which he expended during the last ten years of his life in seeking to attain his objectives. Unfortunately, however, the amount of permanent success which he achieved was not at all proportionate to the greatness of his aims and the energy and sincerity of his endeavours. Some achievements were effected, it is true, particularly along material lines; but in regard to the more important intellectual and spiritual aims, the most that can be said is that he succeeded in laying foundations upon which later attempts may be built.² It is not to be concluded that all the Azhar people, or even the majority of them, were opposed to all reform. Many of the leading spirits of the Azhar were convinced of the need of it and aided and encouraged Muḥammad

class-room notes of the lectures given in Bairūt several years before (these notes had been taken by his brother Ḥamūdah Bey 'Abduh), and had been printed. As he delivered the lectures in the Azhar, he added further comments, additions, and corrections upon the margin. These marginal notes were compiled and incorporated into the text by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, who attended the lectures (*Al-Manār*, viii. 494), and the work was published as *Risālat al-tawḥīd* in 1315/1897. Beginning with the second edition, footnotes were added by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā. The fifth edition, printed in Cairo 1346/1926-7, was carefully revised and further notes added. Cf. introduction to the fifth edition. The lectures on the Qur'ān were first published in *Al-Manār*, then separately in book form in 1904, again in 1905, and again in 1911. Cf. on the above Horten, *Beiträge*, xiii. 99, 100; Michel, *Introd.*, under 'Bibliographie, i, *Ouvrages du Cheikh Mohammed Abdou*'.

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 259. This teacher began by reading *Al-Kāmil*, a complete treatise on grammar, by Al-Mubarrad (Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al-Azdī) A.D. 826-98. Brockelmann, i. 108, 109.

² Cf. *Mashāḥīr*, i. 286. In the opinion of *Al-Manār* (viii. 475), the real reform which constitutes the ground of hope for the Azhar in the future, consisted in the influence of the lectures delivered by Muḥammad 'Abduh upon many of those who heard them.

'Abduh's efforts so long as he was actively supported by the Khedive.¹ But, unfortunately, the favourable attitude of the Khedive was changed into one of determined opposition to all proposed reforms. Thus the reactionary forces gained the upper hand and, finally, Muḥammad 'Abduh, despairing of success, resigned from the Administrative Committee on March 19, 1905,² together with his friend 'Abd al Karīm Salmān and a third member, Shaikh Al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Hanbalī.³ This was the end of Muḥammad 'Abduh's connexion with the Azhar, for his death occurred a few months later; and the Azhar was permitted to relapse more or less, for the time being, into its accustomed and undisturbed ways.⁴

¹ *Mashāhīr*, i. 286, says that the majority of the educated Muslims, particularly those of modern education, agreed with Muḥammad 'Abduh in regard to the need of reformation. He was not the first one to see the need, but he was the first one to dare to say so publicly. This is substantially the opinion of *Al-Manār* (viii. 235, 236). ² *Tārīkh*, iii. 165.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 76. These resignations followed that of Shaikh 'Alī al-Biblāwī as Shaikh al-Azhar. The Mālikite and Shāfi'ite representatives had previously resigned. The resignation of Muḥammad 'Abduh was entirely voluntary; he was not removed by the Government nor forced to resign by the reactionaries. *Tārīkh*, iii. 179, note. Shaikh Ḥassūnah al-Nawāwī, during his term of office as Shaikh al-Azhar, did not oppose reform but simply delayed and postponed, because he thought changes should be introduced gradually. *Tārīkh*, iii. 198, note. This seems to have been the general feeling, even of those who favoured reform. *Tārīkh*, iii. 166. Shaikh Salīm al-Bishrī, on the other hand, who was the appointee of the Khedive, and who was in office during the process of important changes in the curriculum, opposed everything which the Administrative Committee tried to do, and prevented the enforcement of all its enactments. *Al-Manār*, viii. 474, and *Tārīkh*, i. 493, 494. The Khedive opposed Muḥammad 'Abduh, not only in his reforms in the Azhar, but also in his reforms of the courts and of the administration of the Waḳfs (religious endowments). The reason for the Khedive's opposition, as given in *Tārīkh*, i. 562-6, was that 'Abduh stood in the way of the Khedive's purpose to use the Azhar as a means to strengthen his political influence and to turn the funds of the Waḳfs into a source of support for these aims.

⁴ Michel, p. xxxviii, n. 1, refers to further reforms, especially in the nature of re-organization of the courses of study, that were undertaken in 1907. Cf. *Enc. Britt.*, art. 'Egypt, Modern-Education', for reference to this attempt at reform, with the additional statement that it met with so much opposition that in 1909 it was for the time being abandoned. The agitation for reform has been periodically revived since that time. An editorial in the *Egyptian Gazette* for December 3, 1927, states that the question is again being discussed and that the Government is reported to intend setting up a commission to make recommendations. Few modernizing projects, it remarks, encounter such deeply entrenched vested interests as do proposals

Mufti of Egypt.

On June 3, 1899, Muḥammad 'Abduh was appointed, by recommendation of the Khedive himself, Mufti of all Egypt in place of Shaikh Ḥassūnah al-Nawāwī who had resigned.¹ As holder of this office, by virtue of his appointment by the State, he was the supreme official interpreter of the canon law of Islām (the Shari'ah) for the whole country and his 'fatwās', or legal opinions, touching any matters that were referred to him, were authoritative and final.² Most of his predecessors in the office had considered themselves to be jurisconsults to the departments of the Government only, and gave no decisions except on matters referred to them by these departments. Requests from individuals for a deliverance on any subject were generally ignored.³ For this reason, when

for changing Al-Azhar. An account of proposed changes is also to be found in Art. *Al-Azhar To-day and To-morrow*, by S. A. Morrison in *Moslem World*, vol. xvi, April, 1926. These anticipated changes were enacted in 1930. See *Al-Hilāl*, November, 1931, pp. 60 sqq.

¹ This date corresponds to the sixth from the end of Muḥarram, A.H. 1317 *Al-Manār*, viii. 487; *Tārīkh*, i. 602. Shaikh Ḥassūnah had succeeded Shaikh Muḥammad al-'Abbāsī al-Mahdī on the death of the latter in 1897, after having been his deputy for about two years during his final illness. Shaikh Muḥammad al-'Abbāsī, besides having been Shaikh al-Azhar from 1870-87, except for a brief interim in 1882-3, had been also Mufti of Egypt from 1264/1847 until his death, except for a brief interim in 1887 when Shaikh Al-Bannā had taken his place. *Mashāhīr*, ii. 186-9, account written by his son Shaikh Muḥammad 'Abd al-Khālīq al-Ḥifnī. Muḥammad 'Abduh was succeeded as Mufti by Shaikh 'Abd al-Kādir al-Rāfi 'i, who died, however, on the day when his appointment was to have been announced officially. *Al Manār*, viii. 759, 760.

² There is but one Mufti for all Egypt. He is thus a general jurisconsult for the whole country and particularly for the State. He is sometimes known as the Grand Mufti, because canon lawyers (*faqīh*, pl. *fukahā*), in general, have the right to give 'fatwās' of limited range and authority on matters referred to them by their clients, and are therefore in a sense 'muftis', that is, capable of giving a 'fatwā'. Even the Grand Mufti has the right, only by his knowledge of previous decisions, to answer specific questions submitted to him. He is a 'mujtahid bi al-fatwā', i.e. 'a mujtahid by legal opinion', not a 'mujtahid mutlak', i.e. an 'absolute mujtahid', such as were the great legists who formulated the system of canon law from the sources. Cf. Macdonald, *Enc. Islām*, art. 'Idjtiḥād'.

³ *Tārīkh*, iii. 279; i. 646. In official 'fatwās', such as confirmation of the death sentence passed by the Criminal Court, or questions of personal status referred to the Mufti by the Ministry of Justice, &c., decision must be given according to the Ḥanifite code. An unofficial 'fatwā' follows the code of the person requesting it. *Tārīkh*, i. 646.

Muḥammad 'Abduh was appointed to the position, although it is the highest to which a Muslim jurist can aspire, he feared that it would be too specialized and limited in its scope, and would therefore offer few opportunities for general public service.¹ But he succeeded in clothing the office, as he did every other office which he filled, with new dignity and importance.² He opened its doors to individual appeals for decisions,³ and thus transformed the position from one of negligible importance, so far as the general public were concerned, to one of general prestige and influence.⁴ This office he continued to hold until his death.⁵

The many 'fatwās' which he delivered, during his tenure of office, on questions arising out of the daily contact of the Muslims of Egypt with the peoples of other religions and other nations, and with the conditions of modern civilization, and, in particular, questions arising from the circumstance that the Egyptians had in the course of events become amenable to laws other than the canon law of Islām, were characterized by a spirit of liberality and a freedom from bondage to tradition and a desire to render the religion of Islām entirely adaptable to the requirements of modern civilization. But this liberality of view only aroused against him the bitter opposition of those who held to the old ways. Two of these 'fatwās' are best known: one declaring it lawful for Muslims to eat the flesh of animals slain by Jews and Christians; the other declaring it likewise lawful for Muslims to deposit their money in the Postal Savings Banks where it would draw interest.⁶ These 'fatwās' spread his fame throughout the

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 487; *Tārīkh*, i. 646.

² *Tārīkh*, iii. 279.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁵ This is expressly stated in *Mashāhīr*, i. 282; by Michel, p. xxxviii; also by Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 321. It is further, without exception, either stated or inferred in all the newspaper accounts of his death, in *Tārīkh*, iii. in all references to him as the 'Muftī'. Horten, on the other hand, states (*Beiträge*, xiii. 114) that a few months before his death he was removed from being Muftī, basing his statement on his interpretation of a remark in *Tārīkh*, iii. 183: 'He was removed from his office by reason of the efforts of the 'Ulamā who were opposed to his purposes and ideas.' The reference is, however, to his appointment to the Administrative Committee of the Azhar, from which he finally resigned as has been seen above.

⁶ *Tārīkh*, iii. 84, 167, 279; Michel, p. xxxviii; *Beiträge*, xiv. 75. A third one is also referred to in the above statements of *Tārīkh*, also in *Mashāhīr*, i.

Muslim world and made him one of the leading figures of his day, whose opinion was sought on many subjects by people of other lands than Egypt.¹

But he did not confine his activities to the deliverance of legal opinions. One of the outstanding services which he rendered was his investigation of the 'Maḥkamahs', or courts dealing with matters of personal status, administering their decisions on the basis of the Shari'ah.² It was within his province as Mufti to have special oversight over these courts, and his own concern for their efficiency and the respect in which they should be held led him to devote special attention to them. The Government gave him a free hand in making his investigations, and full authority.³ He travelled throughout the country, both Upper and Lower Egypt, visiting every court, whether provincial or district, and ascertained the exact state of each court and its officials by personal contact.⁴ The state of inefficiency into which the courts had fallen he found to be due mainly to the incompetence of the judges and other officials, a failure to follow the proper judicial procedure, the low salaries of the judges and officials, and the inappropriateness and unsuitability of the court-rooms.⁵ He drew up a report embodying all his findings concerning the present deplorable state of the courts, and his recommendations regarding the steps to be taken for their improvement and the better training of the judges. This report he presented to the Department of Justice, which gave the report all due consideration and took steps looking towards putting its recommendations gradually into effect.⁶ The Legislative

287, namely, one permitting Muslims to wear Christian forms of dress, i.e. European. The basis mentioned for these decisions is the absence of any specification in the Qur'an prohibiting these things, especially to those who are required to associate with Europeans. Cf. *Tārīkh*, iii. 167. For text of the first and third of these 'fatwās', and others, see *Tārīkh*, i. 646 sqq.

¹ *Al-Manār* viii. 487.

² Cf. above, p. 68, n. 4.

³ *Tārīkh*, iii. 165, note. He justified his investigations on the ground that he was himself a shaikh of the Ḥanifite rite and a member of the council which chooses the judges, hence he must know the state of the acting officials. Moreover, his connexion with the Azhar gave him opportunity to train successors when they should leave office. *Tārīkh*, iii. 262.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 248, 262.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

⁶ *Al-Manār*, viii. 487; *Tārīkh*, iii. 248, 263; i. 605 sqq. Cf. Michel, p. xxxvi; *Beiträge*, xiv. 74, 75. The report which was presented to the

Council also at this time interested itself in the reform of the courts, and, as a result of its recommendations, the Government appointed two committees under the chairmanship of Muḥammad 'Abduh; one, consisting of the leading scholars ('*Ulamā*), was commissioned to collect all the decisions of law necessary for the work of the judges; the second, consisting of the most noted '*Ulamā* and men of affairs, was directed to outline a project for a school for judges.¹ 'Abduh presented his report on this project a few days before leaving Cairo for Alexandria, where he was overtaken with his last illness.²

By virtue of being Muftī, he became also a member of the Superior Council of the Wakfs Administration. He secured the appointment of a committee, of which he was a member, to study the matter of improving the public religious services in the mosques.³ He himself drew up a report embodying his proposals for reform, the chief items of which were the classification of the officials and attendants of the mosques (*imāms*, *khaṭībs*, *mu'azzins*, &c.), securing a better class of such employees by requiring that the leaders of the public prayer services (*imāms*) and the preachers in the mosques (*khaṭībs*) should be drawn from the teachers in the Azhar, turning the services of these to better account by requiring them to give instruction to those who attend the mosques, and an increase of salary for all those employed in the mosques and cemeteries.⁴ This report was approved by the Council but was not put into effect, except in a partial way, because of the interference of the Khedive.⁵

Member of the Legislative Council.

Following his appointment as Muftī, Muḥammad 'Abduh was, on June 25, 1899, appointed a permanent member of the

Government is given in *Al-Manār*, ii, in sections, the first page of each section being as follows: 577, 593, 609, 625, 648, 663. The introduction is given on p. 759. Text also in *Tārīkh*, i. 608 sqq. ¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 238, 263.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 248, 263. The School for Kādis was actually established in 1907. *Enc. Britt.*, art. 'Egypt, Modern-Education'.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 488; *Tārīkh*, iii. 242; i. 630 sqq.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, iii. 261. 'Proposals for Reform of Mosques', *Al-Manār*, viii. 307-14; *Tārīkh*, i. 633 sqq.; *Beiträge*, xiv. 76.

⁵ *Al-Manār*, viii. 307. For detailed account of the opposition of the Khedive and the measures which he employed, see *Tārīkh*, i. 558 sqq.

Legislative Council and on June 29 attended his first session.¹ Representative government was as yet in its early stages in Egypt. This fact was reflected alike in the limited powers of the Council (it exercised at this time only an advisory capacity), in its haphazard methods of conducting its business, its timidity of action, and in the suspicion and misunderstanding which it entertained towards the Government, and no less in the lack of confidence and consideration displayed by the latter towards the Council.² Muhammad 'Abduh was able to render valuable service to the Council. He proved himself an able parliamentarian, a convincing orator, a skilled committee-man, an experienced administrator, and a discreet and well-informed adviser on all matters that came before it. He soon became its leading member whose opinion on every question was heard with respect. He was chairman of the most important committees which considered matters sent down by the Government, and the head of every delegation which was appointed by the Council to confer with the Government. Under his leadership a spirit of mutual understanding and confidence came to prevail between the two bodies and the prestige of the Council was sensibly increased, both in the opinion of the Government and of the country as a whole. He devoted much of his time to these duties, believing that in so doing he was promoting the ends of representative government, in that he was helping to create a tradition of efficiency and public-mindedness in the present Council which would descend to later ones, and was at the same time helping to educate the nation at large in a more intelligent participation in its own affairs.³

Member of the Muslim Benevolent Society.

Muhammad 'Abduh had been impressed, during his travels in European countries, by the extent to which charitable

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 488; *Tārīkh*, i. 719 sqq.; iii. 247.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 488, 489; *Tārīkh*, iii. 247, 248; i. 721 sqq. Cf. *Beiträge*, xiii. 103; Michel, p. xxxvii. In 1913 the Council was replaced by an Assembly having more extended powers, being allowed a deliberative voice in certain questions. When martial law was declared in 1914 the Assembly adjourned *sine die*. With the granting of the Constitution on October 31, 1922, a new parliamentary body was organized consisting of a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 489; *Tārīkh*, iii. 242.

institutions had been developed in those lands and the importance attached to public co-operation in practical benevolences. Here, he came to believe, was one of the directions in which Muslim peoples might commendably follow the lead of Christian nations. While the religion of Islām enjoins private giving of alms and inculcates concern for the poor, organized and corporate effort on behalf of the needy and unfortunate has never flourished to any great extent in Muslim countries, even to the present day.¹ In order therefore to 'accustom Muslims to unite and to co-operate in good works and in service of the public and to awaken in the hearts of the rich a feeling of compassion for the poor'² he took the lead in the establishment of the Muslim Benevolent Society in 1310/1892 and became one of its charter members.³ The immediate objects of the society were to provide financial assistance for Muslims who were unable to gain their own livelihood and to found schools for children of the poor who could not pay for their children's education. He co-operated most actively with the other founders of the society in securing for it the support and assistance of wealthy and influential people, in organizing and directing its activities and in defending it during its early and critical stages from the attacks of those who attributed to it ulterior political designs. In 1318/1900 he was made its president and held this office until his death.⁴ During this period he even increased his efforts on its behalf.⁵

Efforts on behalf of a Literary Revival.

Reference has already been made to his efforts while editor of the *Journal Officiel* and again while connected with the Azhar,⁶ to encourage a correct use of the Arabic language according to the standards of the days when Arabic culture was at its best. This was no mere excess of academic zeal.

¹ This is the sense of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍa's statement in *Al-Manār*, viii. 490. He says that such effort does not exist in Muslim countries except in India and Egypt, under the shadow of British freedom, and even there such co-operation is still in its infancy.

² *Ibid.*, p. 491.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 490; *Tārīkh*, iii. 243; i. 726 sqq.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, iii. 243.

⁵ For results of his efforts see *Al-Manār*, viii. 491; *Tārīkh*, iii. 244.

⁶ Cf. above, pp. 47, 77.

The Arabic language, he maintained, is the basis of the Islāmic religion.¹ It is not possible for the Muslim community to be in a flourishing condition unless its language is flourishing.² Therefore the language must be reformed as a means to the reform of religion. 'For in the reform of our language', he had said in an address to the scholars of Tunis, 'is the one single means to the reform of our religious beliefs. It is ignorance of their language on the part of Muslims that has prevented them from understanding what is contained in the books of their religion and the sayings of the earlier generations. For in the classical Arabic tongue there are stores of learning and treasures of culture which are inaccessible except through acquiring ability to use the language.'³ But to secure a revival of the language by means of the books that were in use in the Azhar, was, he believed, impossible.⁴ It was necessary therefore to revive the works of the great Imāms and scholars which were written when Muslim learning was flourishing.

To this end a society was founded in 1900, called 'The Society for the Revival of the Arabic Sciences', of which Muḥammad 'Abduh was president.⁵ Through his efforts two important works on rhetoric were edited, after manuscripts for this purpose had been secured from other countries.⁶ With the aid of Shaikh Muḥammad al-Shankīṭī⁷ he edited a monumental work on Arabic philology in seventeen volumes.⁸ Following this, a beginning was made in editing the *Muwattā* of the Imām Mālik, for which Muḥammad 'Abduh secured manuscripts from Tunis, Fez, and elsewhere.⁹ He also gave

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 259.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 491.

³ *Tafsīr sūrat al-'aṣr wa khiṭāb 'āmm fī al-tarbiyah wa al-ta'lim*, p. 91. 2nd ed., Al-Manār Press, Cairo, 1330/1911.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 491.

⁵ *Al-Manār*, vii. 491, and *Tārīkh*, iii. 274; i. 753 sqq.

⁶ These works were *Asrār al-balāghah* and *Dalā'il al-i'jāz*. by 'Abd al-Ḳāhīr al-Jurjānī (d. A.D. 1078). Cf. Brockelmann, i. 287, 288, nrs. iv. and v.

⁷ *Al-Manār*, viii. 491; *Tārīkh*, iii. 243. Al-Shankīṭī was a Syrian scholar who was prevailed upon by Muḥammad 'Abduh to remain in Egypt for this work. Cf. latter reference. He died a few months before the death of Muḥammad 'Abduh. *Tārīkh*, iii. 214.

⁸ This was *Al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ*, by Ibn Sīdah, the Spanish philologist, A.D. 1007-66; Brockelmann, i. 309.

⁹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 491. This book is there called *Al-Mudawwanah*. Cf. *Beiträge*, xiii. 113. Cf. also the correspondence of Muḥammad 'Abduh with

his encouragement to all who by authorship or translation of foreign works into Arabic, were helping to bring about the literary revival for which he was working.¹

Defence of Islām.

Following the example of his master Jamāl al-Dīn, Muḥammad 'Abduh took up the defence of Islām against attacks and aspersions whenever occasion demanded or opportunity offered. The two outstanding instances of this are his replies to M. Gabriel Hanotaux, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Farah Anṭūn, editor of the Arabic magazine *Al-Jāmi'ah*. His incisive and vigorous replies to both of these opponents won him additional fame throughout the world of Islām as its ablest modern apologist.

The article by M. Hanotaux appeared in the *Journal de Paris* early in 1900 under the caption: 'Face to Face with Islām and the Muslim Question'. This article was translated into Arabic and published by the Arabic newspaper *Al-Mu'ayyad*.² The immediate concern of M. Hanotaux was to arouse the French Government and the French people to a realization of the differences which separate the Muslim peoples in the French colonial possessions from their own Christian points of view, and to urge the Government, after investigation and consultation, 'to draw up a brief political document containing a statement of the principles governing their relations with the world of Islām'.³ To emphasize the differences between the two religions, or rather the two civilizations, the one Aryan in origin, he maintained, the other Semitic, he discussed their respective points of view on two the Sulṭān 'Abd al-'Azīz of Morocco and Mawlai Idrīs b. Mawlai 'Abd al-Hādī, Grand Kāḍī and teacher in the University of Fez, on the subject of securing manuscripts of this work, *Tārīkh*, ii. 545, 546.

¹ The newspaper, *Al-Waṭan*, attributes to the influence of Muḥammad 'Abduh the translation of *Les Misérables* into Arabic under the title *Al-Bu'asā*, i.e. 'The Unfortunates', by the noted poet Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm. The translator dedicated his work to Muḥammad 'Abduh, 'the resource of the despairing and the resort of the unfortunate'. *Tārīkh*, ii. 553, letter of the translator to Muḥammad 'Abduh, who replies. Cf. also other letters of the latter to authors and translators, pp. 551-4.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 382. M. Hanotaux's first article is given pp. 382-95, and Muḥammad 'Abduh's reply to it pp. 395-411. See lengthy discussion of these two cases and others, *Tārīkh*, i. 789 sqq.

³ *Tārīkh*, ii. 393.

fundamental questions of religion, namely, the nature of God, and predestination or the question of man's power of choice. In regard to the nature of God, Christian belief in the Trinity or, in other words, God's immanence in human life, has tended to an appreciation of man's worth and his nearness to God, while the Muslim belief in God's unity and transcendence has tended towards the thought of man's insignificance and helplessness. In the same manner, the Christian idea of man's free will has led him to the active use of means and self-dependence, while the Muslim doctrine of predestination has caused him to submit blindly to a law that knows no change.

As soon as Muḥammad 'Abduh read this article in *Al-Mu'ayyad* he sent off a reply at once to the same newspaper.

He criticized, in his reply, M. Hanotaux's reading of history. The present culture of Europe did not come from the original Aryan settlers; and as for the Greeks, whom M. Hanotaux called the teachers of Europe, they derived their civilization from contact with Semitic nations. When Europe knew no other civilization than that of war and bloodshed, Islām came to it bringing the arts and sciences and learning of the Persians and the Aryan peoples of Asia, of the Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks, after they had purified these of the impurities introduced by the rulers of western nations.¹ The truth is that all nations borrow from one another according to need, and the western Aryan has borrowed from the eastern Semitic more than the depressed East is taking to-day from the independent West.² This is, then, no question of civilization but only one of religion.

The doctrine of the unity of God, protested Muḥammad 'Abduh, is not a Semitic belief but a Hebrew belief only, for the Phoenicians, Arabs, and other Semites were heathen.³ Discussions of predestination, to come to the particular questions raised, are not peculiar to any one religion. Further, there is no agreement among Christians on the question of man's free will, as witness the Thomists, or Dominicans, who are 'Compulsionists' (*Jabariyyah*) and the Jesuits who are 'Free-willers' (*Kadariyyah*). The question is not really Semitic but Aryan in origin.⁴ The Kur'ān denies compulsion and, in about forty-six verses, teaches 'acquisition' and free will; and, in this spirit, the Prophet and the Companions and the early Muslims were active in bringing about that spread

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 397. ² *Ibid.*, p. 399. ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 400. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 401.

of Islām of which M. Hanotaux complains.¹ True, sloth and indifference did later take hold of Muslim peoples through the influence of certain views which were affected by some of the Ṣūfīs, views which are also Aryan benefits, coming as they did from India and Persia.²

The doctrine of the unity and transcendence of God, turning to the second question, 'Abduh showed historically, by a comparison of ideas of God existing among primitive Africans, and among Buddhists and Brahmans with those of the Greek philosophers and the ancient Egyptian priesthood, to be the highest form of reasonable belief attainable by the intellect, whereas, in belief in the Trinity, reason has no place, as Christians confess.³ The strength of the Christian appeal to a heathen world, up to the time of Constantine, was the transcendence of God. Only then there entered the idea of human comparisons which brought in evils which persisted until the Reformation.⁴

When the reply of 'Abduh appeared, the newspaper *Al-Ahrām* came out with a defence of M. Hanotaux on the ground that his article had been imperfectly translated. When the latter read this article in the French edition of *Al-Ahrām* he wrote a second article in the *Journal*, which *Al-Ahrām* also translated, under the title 'Islām Again'. It appeared on May 21, 1900. In it Hanotaux explains that he had intended no attack upon Islām but had rather had in view only respect and moderation, conciliation and concord.⁵ Later when the editor of *Al-Ahrām* was in Paris, he secured an interview with M. Hanotaux on the questions under discussion and published the results in his paper on July 16, 1900.⁶ M. Hanotaux reiterates all absence of intention to attack Islām. He cannot, however, affirm that the East is as far advanced as European governments in justice, freedom, and civilization, nor does he believe that in the present union of Church and State in Islām is to be found a policy that will make for the advancement of the East. Europe had to learn to separate the two for her own good.

To this Muḥammad 'Abduh replied in three articles pub-

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 402.

² *Ibid.*, p. 406.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 411. The article is given pp. 452-8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 458-67.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 403.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 407.

lished in *Al-Mu'ayyad*.¹ He summoned Muslims to take to heart the admonitions of M. Hanotaux concerning their weaknesses, that they may fit themselves for competition with Europe. He explained the objectives of Pan-Islāmism to which M. Hanotaux had referred, as not political but religious, an attempt to summon Muslim peoples to reform their own conditions through the only means that promised success, namely, religious reform. He admitted with much frankness the weakness and defects of Muslims which this movement seeks to reform, and maintained that, had the Muslim rulers of recent days been princes of the Church as well as of the State, they could not have openly contravened religion in those acts of oppression and excess and prodigality that have brought woe to Muslim countries and deprived them of their dearest possession—their independence.²

His second defence was called forth by an article, written by the Christian editor of the magazine *Al-Jāmi'ah*, concerning the great Muslim philosopher of Spain, Ibn Rushd (Averroes). In the course of his discussion, the writer drew a comparison between Islām and Christianity in the matter of tolerance towards learning and philosophy, asserting that Christianity has been more tolerant towards scholars and philosophers and has persecuted them less than has Islām. This has been due to the fact that the union of the civil and religious authority in Islām has made a tolerant attitude more difficult than in Christianity; and a practical proof of the greater tolerance of Christianity is offered, in that learning has actually triumphed over persecution in Christian Europe and has produced our modern civilization, whereas, in Islām,

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 467–84. The first of these articles appeared in *Al-Mu'ayyad* under date of July 25, 1900. Cf. *Al-Islām wa al-radd 'alā muntakidih* ('Islām and the Reply to its Critics'), Tawfiq Literary Press, Cairo, 1343/1924, 1925, p. 62, note. This work includes the whole series of articles and interviews of M. Hanotaux, and Muḥammad 'Abduh's replies. It contains also four other articles by Muḥammad 'Abduh, reproduced from his book *Risālat al-Tawhīd*, and one by Jamāl al-Dīn from his book *Al-radd 'alā al-dahriyyīn* ('Refutation of the Materialists'). It contains also an article by Muḥammad Bey Farīd Wajdī, from his book *Al-Madaniyyah wa al-Islām* ('Civilization and Islām'), and a series of articles which appeared in *Al-Mu'ayyad* during January, 1900, concerning the Muslim Conference on Education that convened in Calcutta, India, on December 27, 1899.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 479.

it has not triumphed even to the present day. The article also attributed to Muslim scholars the denial of the efficacy of secondary causes and asserted that Ibn Rushd was in reality an unbeliever.¹

'Abduh, in his reply, dealt with four points which he considered had been raised by these assertions.

(1) Muslims have been tolerant towards their own philosophers but not towards those of other faiths. In reply, he shows the tolerance of Muslims towards all races and religions by an appeal to non-Muslim historians and philosophers. (2) The sects of Islām have fought with one another for the sake of their religious beliefs. This he meets with a denial. (3) The nature of Islām prevents tolerance towards learning while that of Christianity encourages it. This he considers the most essential point and he discusses it at length. He takes up one by one the fundamental positions of Christianity which indicate its nature, and likewise those of Islām, comparing and contrasting the two and showing the results and tendencies of each. (4) Europeans have come to enjoy the fruits of modern civilization by grace of the religious tolerance of Christianity. His reply to this is to show how Christianity has persecuted not only its own scholars but also the adherents of other faiths, and further to show what Islām has contributed to learning and civilization and the protection afforded by the great Muslim rulers to scholars of their own and other faiths. He then discusses at length the causes which have brought about the present-day rigidity of Islām as a system, and its deleterious effects upon the condition of Muslims to-day, and concludes with a consideration of the philosophy of Ibn Rushd and his attitude, and that of Muslim theologians, regarding matter and existence, with reference to the question raised by the writer to whom he is replying.

Unfinished Plans.

The resignation of Muḥammad 'Abduh from the Administrative Committee of the Azhar had defeated more than one of his plans. He had acceded to the suggestion of Shaikh

¹ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah ma' al-'ilm wa al-madaniyyah* ('Islām and Christianity and their Respective Attitudes towards Learning and Civilization'), Al-Manār Press, Cairo, 3rd ed., 1341/1923, pp. 4, 5, of the introduction, and pp. 7, 8, 9, in which Muḥammad 'Abduh summarizes the matters under discussion. The reply of 'Abduh first appeared as articles in *Al-Manār*, and were then published under the above title.

'Alī al-Biblāwī, then Shaikh al-Azhar, to give lectures in the Azhar on the history of Islām, and proposed to write a text-book on the subject according to modern methods.¹ When his connexion with the Azhar ceased, this project was abandoned. Moreover, when he had found himself unable to contend with the current of opposition in the Azhar, he realized that his hopes for making the Azhar a centre for the training of men who would reform and revive Islām had ended in failure. He then conceived the plan of founding a new institution for this purpose that could be developed according to his own ideas. A tract of land was donated by a rich Pasha who had been won to sympathy with the idea, and a beginning was made in preparing plans for the institution; but these plans were interrupted by his death.² His commentary on the Ḳur'ān was also left incomplete at his death.³

He had planned also the formation of a company for the publication in Cairo of a daily Arabic newspaper of a model character, with carefully chosen staff of editors and contributors. The chief emphasis was to be upon purposes of general reform and the correct and truthful reporting of news items, and attention to political matters was to be limited and restricted. Plans had progressed so far that a beginning in publication was in sight, but the whole matter was brought to an end with his death.⁴ He had also purposed making a tour of visitation among the Muslims of India, Persia, and Russia, that he might become acquainted at first-hand with their conditions as he had with conditions of Muslims in the west.⁵

Final Illness and Death.

The illness to which he succumbed overtook him at the home of his friend, Muḥammad Bey Rāsīm in Seffer, Ramleh,

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 899.

² This tract was donated by Aḥmad Pasha al-Minshāwī. *Al-Manār*, viii. 895. The school was later founded by Muḥammad Raḥīd Ridā. Cf. below on 'Institute of Propaganda and Guidance'.

³ His commentary ends with Sūrah iv. 125. *Al-Manār*, xxviii (1927), 654. Cf. below, on 'Manār Commentary'.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 896.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 896.

a suburb of Alexandria, on the eve of his leaving for Europe.¹ His malady had been one of long standing but serious results were not feared from it until about a week before his death,² although it had appeared in serious form in an illness which had befallen him during a trip to the Sudan some time before the final occurrences in the Azhar which led to his resignation.³ He had expected to go to Europe for treatment and then proceed to Morocco.⁴ But it soon became evident that travel was impossible, and after a few days' illness, the end came at five o'clock on the afternoon of Tuesday, July 11, 1905 (the eighth of Jumādā I, A.H. 1323).⁵

On the following morning an impressive funeral cortège accompanied the body to the railroad station. From there a special train, furnished by the Government, conveyed the body to Cairo, stopping at a number of the larger cities and towns *en route* to permit the assembled crowds to pay their respects.⁶ At Cairo another cortège, more impressive even than the one in Alexandria, made up of high government officials, diplomatic representatives, detachments of the army and the mounted police, the leading scholars, official representatives of the various religious communities, members of the wealthy and influential classes, students from the Azhar, and a vast concourse of people from all classes and religious faiths, conveyed the body to the Azhar Mosque where the funeral prayers were said.⁷ No eulogies were pronounced in the Azhar as had formerly been done on the occasion of the death of leading shaikhs of the Azhar until Muḥammad 'Abduh had put an end to the custom.⁸ Following the con-

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 9, 78.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 76, 151. The disease was cancer of the kidney.

³ That is to say, during the preceding winter. *Tārīkh*, iii. 179 note.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 60, 151 ; *Al-Manār*, viii. 378. Some of the newspapers (e.g. *Al-Ahrām*, *Tārīkh*, iii. 14), remarked on the coincidence that Reuter's telegrams reported on the same day the death of Sir William Muir, the eminent authority on Islām, and Dr. Sidney Smith of America, a friend of Muḥammad 'Abduh's.

⁶ *Tārīkh*, iii. 76.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 171. The absence from the funeral procession of other innovations (*bida'*) which he had opposed was also noted in the newspaper accounts, such as the absence of Ḳur'ān readers or chanters, and those bearing copies of the Ḳur'ān or carrying incense burners. On the occasion

clusion of the brief service at the mosque, the procession resumed its way to the cemetery.¹ Here the burial took place, and immediately thereafter Ḥasan Pasha 'Āṣim dismissed the assemblage without allowing opportunity for the presentation of eulogistic remarks.² On the fortieth day after the death, according to custom, a memorial service was held, however; and on this occasion a great crowd again gathered in the cemetery. Six speakers carefully chosen because of their connexion with the deceased and their familiarity with his aims and views, reviewed various phases of his life and spoke in eulogy of him and his work.³

Character and Influence.

With the death of Muḥammad 'Abduh, all the virulent criticisms, violent attacks, and covert intrigues that had centred about his person and been directed against his activities,⁴ and which seem to have increased in intensity during his last two years,⁵ were silenced and rebuked in the widespread and very general acknowledgement of the irreparable loss which Egypt and the cause of Islām had sustained in his death.⁶ Differences of opinion and even differences of religion were forgotten as Muslims, Jews, and Christians united to pay honour to one whom all now recognized as a genuine patriot, an exceptional scholar, and a courageous and great-minded leader and reformer.⁷

He undoubtedly possessed many of the essential qualities of leadership. In physical appearance he is described as squarely and strongly built, although not above the average height, heavily bearded, with piercing glance and sonorous

of the death of his mother, Muḥammad 'Abduh had forbidden these practices. *Ibid.*, p. 171, note.

¹ To the cemetery called 'Qarāfat al-mujāwirīn'. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 171.

³ These speakers were chosen beforehand, partly because a great many persons wished to express in this public way their praise of the departed leader. The speakers who reviewed his life and work were Ḥasan Pasha 'Āṣim, Ḥasan Pasha 'Abd al-Rāziq, Shaikh Aḥmad Abū Khaṭwah, and Kāsim Bey Amīn. The other two speakers composed and recited elegiac poems: these were Ḥāfiz Ibrāhīm and Ḥifnī Bey Nāṣif. *Tārīkh*, iii. 236, 237; i. 1050, 1051.

⁴ Cf. *Koranauslegung*, p. 323.

⁵ *Tārīkh*, iii. 84.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

voice.¹ In disposition he was excitable and quick tempered. He was a fluent and convincing speaker, excelling in extemporaneous address, and his use of the Arabic, both in speech and in writing, was notable for its elegance and its eloquence. His memory was unusually retentive and his intellectual powers of unquestionable superiority. He was an indefatigable worker and displayed practical ability and administrative capacity in many different fields.

His attainments in learning placed him in the forefront of Muslim scholars of his day and won him wide recognition throughout the Muslim world. He was deeply versed in all the fields of Muslim learning, philosophy, theology, Qur'ān interpretation, jurisprudence, traditions. His acquaintance with Arabic literature was very wide and thorough and moulded his own literary style, and was turned by him to practical account in teaching and in editing important literary works. He was interested to an unusual degree in the history of Islām. He not only studied and commented on Ibn Khaldūn's great history, but also devoted the introductory section of his *Risālat al-tawḥīd* to an historical review of the development of Islām, in which he evinces a soundness of historical judgement that is not common among Muslim scholars.² In the philosophical portions of his works he showed himself to have been, as Professor Horten thinks, 'no Avicenna, not even a gifted philosopher';³ still it must be said, as the same scholar acknowledges, that in his attempt to relegate the traditional philosophy of Islām to the background and to introduce a modern philosophy, and likewise

¹ Descriptions of his physical appearance and characteristics and estimates of his character and work are found in *Mashāḥir*, i. 283 sqq.; *Al-Manār*, viii. 536 sqq., 901; *Tārīkh*, iii. 45 sqq., from *Al-Muḥaṭṭam*, one of the leading newspapers of Cairo; *ibid.*, pp. 96 sqq., from the Arabic magazine *Al-Diyā*, edited by the Syrian scholar, Shaikh Ibrāhīm al-Yāzījī, a personal friend of Muḥammad 'Abduh; *ibid.*, pp. 264 sqq., memorial address of Kāsim Bey Amīn; *ibid.*, pp. 101 sqq., from the Arabic magazine of Cairo, *Al-Muḥaṭṭaf*. These are the most important accounts, although practically all the newspapers and magazines of that date gave much space to records of his life and work.

² *Risālat al-tawḥīd*, 5th ed., 1346/1926-7, pp. 5-25. In the same work, he has a concluding section on 'The spread of Islām with a rapidity the like of which has not been known in history, and the causes of it', p. 201 sqq.

³ *Beiträge*, xiv. 83.

in his attempt to restate the theology of Islām in terms which are more consonant with modern ways of thinking, he 'accomplished all that could have been expected in the not exactly favourable circumstances'.¹

His acquaintance with works of European scholars in various fields was also not inconsiderable. His introduction to them was acquired through translated works. But when already past forty years of age he learned French that he might read such works at first-hand, and thereafter he read them persistently. His interest was centred chiefly in works of sociology, ethics, history, philosophy, and education.² He was a great admirer of Herbert Spencer, the English philosopher, whom he visited in England,³ and translated his work on 'Education' from a French version into Arabic in order that he might profit by his views in drafting his plans for the reform of Egyptian schools.⁴ His admiration, in like manner, for Tolstoi led him to write a letter to the great Russian on the occasion of the latter's excommunication from the Russian Church.⁵ During his last visit to Europe he learned the Ḥimyaritic script because of the relation sustained by the Ḥimyar kingdom to the Arabs and the history of Islām.⁶

His greatness of character impressed all who knew him. Because of his native dignity of bearing and his refusal to flatter or cajole any one, even the great and influential, he was sometimes accused of pride. But in reality he was humble, as was evident from his considerate and ingratiating manner of address to his friends and even to his students. He was magnanimous and forgiving towards those who opposed him and thought to injure him, yet he was not easily

¹ Ibid., p. 83.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 394.

³ Although Spencer was at that time an old man and had given up meeting people, he was induced by Mr. Wilfred Blunt to consent to a meeting with Muḥammad 'Abduh who went to England for that purpose. *Tārīkh*, iii. 182.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, iii. 103, 138, 182. The reference to plans for the reform of the schools is probably to the 'Proposals for Reform, written to convince the authorities in Egypt of the necessity of concern for religious education', published in *Tārīkh*, ii. 364-81, from a rough draft. The proposals were written after his return to Egypt from Syria.

⁵ *Tārīkh*, ii. 547, where the letter is reproduced. *Vide* also two letters to an English clergyman who, in public addresses in London, had spoken in praise of Islām, *ibid.*, p. 513 sqq.

⁶ *Al-Manār*, viii. 394.

imposed upon. He was trustful towards his friends, erring even on the side of over-estimating the good will and good intentions of those who professed to be his friends. His generosity to the poor and needy was proverbial: he was known as 'the father of the unfortunate', and his residence at 'Ain Shams, which came to be known as 'the Refuge of the Unfortunate', was continually besieged by applicants for assistance.¹ He was particularly interested in aiding needy students of the Azhar, and in his private accounts the names of many of them appeared as receiving monthly allowances from him.² He was truthful and frank in stating his opinions, and tried always to be fair and exact in his statements.³ His decisions were made with deliberation, yet once made, were steadfastly adhered to.⁴ His independence in thought and action was remarkable, yet he sought advice and help from others. But the attribute which most impressed his contemporaries and which constitutes his chief claim to greatness of character, was his moral courage. 'In the very heart of the East,' said a leading Arabic newspaper, 'in the lands of fear and terror and tyranny, he was a man of daring disposition and free spirit, openly expressing his opinion and adhering to it, without fear of the might of any one in authority or the power of any of the great; and this adherence to his opinion, this daring and lack of fear, drew down upon him many painful experiences and numerous misfortunes and trials.'⁵

Devotion to Islām was the controlling motive of his life. It was his deep conviction that only by a thorough-going reform of the whole system that amounted, indeed, to the evolution of a new Islām, although to him it meant but a return to the original form, could this religion prove its inherent adaptability to present-day conditions. In the accomplishment of this purpose his zeal knew no bounds. 'I fear nothing but death,' he is reported to have said, 'because

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 60, 98.

² *Ibid.*, p. 261.

³ Cf. his concern to correct what he thought was an insufficient statement in his Qur'ān commentary, *Al-Manār*, viii. 548.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, viii. 536. He read a number of European works on the training of the will. *Ibid.*, p. 394.

⁵ *Tārīkh*, iii. 46, from *Al-Muḥaṭṭam*. Cf. also *Al-Muḥaṭṭif*, *ibid.*, p. 103; *Mashāhīr*, i. 286.

it will put an end to the work in which I am engaged.'¹ When friends urged him to abandon the many responsible positions which he held, which he used to advance his reform purposes, and retire to his former position in the Court of Appeal where he would receive a larger salary and be free from the storm of abuse which was then assailing him, he refused to listen; 'for, as I knew him,' said a friend, 'it was impossible for him to live any other kind of a life than the one he was living.'² His concern for the backward state of Muslim countries caused him at times to lie awake at night pondering over means of remedying the situation.³ With concern for the religion and peoples of Islām in general, he combined a love for his own country which was particularly noticeable in a Muslim land, where loyalty to Islām takes the place, as a rule, of devotion to country.⁴ In all his activities he was supported by an undaunted hope concerning the final successful issue, that outweighed his anxieties and disappointments. 'He possessed a hope concerning the reform of his nation which nothing could shake. He had a firm belief that the good seed, if sown on the fertile soil of our country, would spring up and blossom and bear fruit, as the seeds of corruption have sprung up in it and blossomed and borne fruit. Therefore he sowed with open hand all the good thoughts and noble sentiments and beneficial teachings which he had gathered during his lifetime.'⁵

He found the people of Egypt divided into two parties with reference to the reforms which he was attempting. There was the conservative party, who decidedly refused any change from the existing state of affairs, out of conviction that what had been handed down from the venerated past was sacred and immune to change. These were largely represented by the Azhar class and their following. There was also a liberal, or modernizing, party, composed for the most part of those who

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 37, 61.

² *Ibid.*, p. 266, memorial address of Kāsim Bey Amīn.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 550.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, iii. 268, address of Kāsim Bey Amīn. Cf. Lord Cromer's opinion that he was in fact, 'a somewhat dreamy, unpractical, yet genuine patriot'. *Modern Egypt*, ii. 180.

⁵ *Tārīkh*, iii. 268, address of Kāsim Bey Amīn.

had received a modern education and were impatient of a devotion to the past that would shackle freedom of thought and render impossible all participation in modern progress.¹ Muḥammad 'Abduh had something in common with both parties and was, in a sense, in the forefront of both.² The Conservatives respected his learning and regarded him as the leading scholar and apologist of Islām, although they would have none of his modernizing tendency. The Moderns, on the other hand, looked to him as their leader, in whose principles they discerned the promise of a new day.

Not all those who opposed him, however, belonged of sincere conviction to the orthodox party. There were some who were in positions of influence who saw in his activities or his principles some menace to their position or inconvenience to themselves;³ others were profiting in one way or another from the existing state of affairs; still others had private ends which could not be served by alliance with his party.⁴ Those who had hopes of the political unification of Muslim countries under one supreme Muslim ruler, feared that the spread of modern civilization among their people and the increased intercourse with non-Muslim peoples which would result, would jeopardize this ambitious scheme.⁵ But by far the greater number of those who were antagonistic to his ideas and objected to many of his activities were those who were conservative through conviction or ignorance, to whom acceptance of belief on the authority of past teachers represented the divinely ordained order of things. 'What kind of a shaikh is this', was the objection which these raised, 'who speaks French and travels in European countries, who translates their writings and quotes from their philosophers and disputes with their learned men, who gives "fatwās" of a kind that no one of his predecessors ever did, and takes part in benevolent societies and collects money for the poor and unfortunate?'⁶ These poisoned the minds of the common people against him by insinuations, if not open charges, against his orthodoxy; and the common people, having little

¹ *Mashāḥīr*, i. 286.

² *Tārīkh*, iii. 45, 73, 103, 154.

³ *Mashāḥīr*, i. 286.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, iii. 76.

⁵ *Mashāḥīr*, i. 286.

⁶ *Tārīkh*, iii. 268, address of Kāsim Bey Amīn.

understanding of the real aims which he was trying to accomplish, followed their accustomed leaders and came to think of him as a 'kāfir', an unbeliever.¹

While, on the other hand, the Modernists followed the lead of Muhammad 'Abduh generally, there were some who considered that his modernizing measures were not thorough enough. These were the ones who advocated the wholesale introduction of European customs along with the commodities and conveniences of European civilization. These were the 'intellectuals' whom he had criticized in his earlier days for their superficial views of what is involved in the uplift of the whole nation.² Thus, in a measure, 'Abduh and his party fell between the two extremes. 'They were too much tainted with heterodoxy', said Lord Cromer, 'to carry far along with them the conservative Moslems. Nor were they sufficiently Europeanized to win the mimics of European ways. They were neither good enough Moslems nor good enough Europeans.'³ Yet the strength of the sentiment for advancement and reform was much greater and more widespread than might be concluded from the number of those who openly allied themselves with him.⁴ Even in the Azhar, as has been seen, there were numbers who recognized the necessity for reform and approved his efforts; and a much greater number outside of the Azhar were at heart in sympathy with his aims. Yet the same faintheartedness and fear of allowing their opinions to be known, the same indecision and inactivity which prevented energetic co-operation with his endeavours in the Azhar, operated in like manner to silence the voices

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 76, 154; *Mashāhīr*, i. 286.

² Cf. above, p. 49.

³ *Modern Egypt*, ii. 181.

⁴ Cf. Horten, *Beiträge*, xiv. 77, who says that since the speakers who delivered the addresses at the memorial service for Muhammad 'Abduh represented the educated class and the leading circles of Egypt, and spoke in his spirit, they furnish at the same time a testimony to the success of his reform efforts. On the seventeenth anniversary of his death, July 11, 1922, a meeting which was organized by his adherents and sympathizers to revive his memory by a review of his life and work, was held in the Egyptian University in Cairo. According to *Al-Manār*, the attendance was about thirteen hundred. Aḥmad Luṭfī Bey al-Sayyid, President of the Egyptian University, who made the address of welcome, claimed that the majority of these were former pupils of Muhammad 'Abduh or pupils of his pupils. *Al-Manār*, xxiii. 513 sqq. *Tārīkh*, i. 1053 sqq.

and paralyse the activities of the larger group without; while on the other hand, those who opposed him were active and vehemently articulate. The weakness and timidity of his friends and sympathizers and the boldness and resoluteness of his opponents were the greatest obstacles which he encountered in the course of his reforms.¹

His fame and influence were by no means confined to Egypt. Muslims from all quarters of the globe, attracted by his renown for zeal on behalf of his country and the religion of Islām, wrote to him, desiring decisions (*fatwās*) on matters of law and religion, or seeking to avail themselves of the benefit of his scholarship.² His correspondence on these matters embraced the leading scholars and the rulers and high officials of Muslim lands from India to Morocco.³ What his name stood for throughout the East is indicated by the fact that the newspapers in Syria and other parts of the Ottoman Empire were forbidden by the Sulṭān to print any report of his death or any elegy of him or account of his life, while, previous to his death, even to mention his name was forbidden because the mere mention of it required the mention of reform.⁴ As for the extent of his reputation, witness is furnished by the messages of condolence which were sent to his relatives or numbers of his followers on the occasion of his death: Syria, India, Baḥrain, Singapore, Java, Persia, Russia, Tunis, Algiers, the circle of the lands of Islām.⁵ To these are to be added the newspapers and magazines which carried biographical and eulogistic accounts of his life and work, not only of many of the lands just mentioned, but also the Arabic newspapers of San Paolo, Brazil, and of New York, which mention his name and that of Jamāl al-Dīn side

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 269, address of Kāsim Bey Amin.

² *Mashāḥīr*, i. 283; *Al-Manār*, viii. 487.

³ His correspondents include: a scholar of Hyderabad, India, *Tārīkh*, ii. 519, 520; the Sulṭān of Morocco, Mawlai 'Abd al-'Aziz, p. 545; high Turkish officials in Constantinople and elsewhere, pp. 532, 533; Shaikh Ibrāhīm al-Yāzījī, the Syrian scholar of Bairūt, pp. 540-1, 557; other Syrian scholars in Damascus, Aleppo, and elsewhere, pp. 542, 543, 548, 549; Mawlai Idrīs b. Mawlai 'Abd al-Hādī, scholar and judge of Fez, Morocco, pp. 546, 547. Cf. also his appeals on reform to members of the society 'Al-'Urwah al-Wuthk'ah' in many lands, pp. 488-513.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, iii. 150, note. ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 285-98; Horten, *Beiträge*, xiv. 76.

by side with the heroes of freedom in Turkey, Midhat Pasha, and Fuad Pasha.¹ European scholarship also paid its tribute of respect in the message of Professor E. G. Browne, English scholar and the biographer of Jamāl al-Dīn, who mourns the death of Muḥammad 'Abduh as one 'the like of whom he had never seen whether in the East or in the West' for scholarship, piety, wisdom, eloquence, and beneficent deeds.²

That his influence is still potent in lands of the East outside of Egypt, is evident from the increasing number of translations of his works into other languages which continue to be made. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, editor of the periodical *Al-Manār*, is authority for the statement that 'Abduh's important work on theology, *Risālat al-tawḥīd*, which contains a summary of the principal doctrines advocated by him, has been translated into the Urdu language and is being used as a text-book in the College of Aligarh, and elsewhere, in India.³ Dr. Aḥmed Muḥiddin, in his history of the development of Modernism in Turkey, states that 'Abduh's works have been partially translated into Turkish by M. Ākif, and thinks it possible that the views of the modern Turkish reformers, and, in less measure, those of the Turkish Nationalists as well, have a close connexion with the teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh.⁴ According to the same writer, a work on the unification of the schools of canon law, by the editor of *Al-Manār*, has also been translated into Turkish by Aḥmad Ḥamdī.⁵

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 150; *Al-Afkār* and *Al-Manāẓir* of San Paolo, and *Mir'āt al-Gharb* of New York. The editors of these newspapers were Syrian Christians, who lamented his loss to all Arabic-speaking communities, both Christian and Muslim.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 298, 299. The letter was written in Arabic to Ḥamūdāh Bey 'Abduh, brother of Muḥammad 'Abduh. His estimate deserves to be given at length. He says in part: 'During my lifetime I have seen many lands and many peoples. But I have never seen one like the deceased, whether in the East or in the West. For indeed he was unique in his scholarship, unique in piety and reverence, unique in his insight and comprehension, not only of the external appearances of matters but also of their inner significance, unique in his perseverance and the sincerity of his motives, unique in his eloquence and fluency, scholar, man of practical affairs, benefactor, one who feared God and did his utmost in his service, a lover of learning and a haven to the poor and needy.' ³ *Risālah*, publisher's preface, p. 'k'.

⁴ *Die Kulturbewegung im modernen Türkentum*, by Dr. Phil. Aḥmed Muḥiddin, Leipzig, 1921, p. 64.

⁵ The title of the translated work is *Mezahibin telfiqi we islamyn bir*

The doctrines of Muhammad 'Abduh are also making progress in Malaysia, according to information which has been made available by Dr. H. Kraemer, a Dutch scholar who has had special opportunities to study the conditions of Islām in the Dutch East Indies.¹ He writes:

'As concerns Muhammad 'Abduh, his influence is beginning to penetrate (i.e. in the Dutch East Indies). A Malayan translation of his commentary is in print and is available in parts. In Jogja (Djokjakarta) the "Muhammadiya"² tries to propagate the Islām of Muhammad 'Abduh, very often without mentioning him by name. Progress along Western lines consists here, for the most part, in furtherance of education and of medical care, and of propaganda through the agency of young men; everything, stimulated by the activities of the missionary bodies and following their methods. Besides the "Muhammadiya", the movement "Irshād", found more in Batavia and among the Arabs, is to be reckoned as progressive. It is under the leadership of Shaikh Ahmad Surkati, of Batavia, a man of much ability. Of any really organized orthodox activity or counter activity, one can scarcely speak. There are several minor movements, but they are little organized. Polemical outbursts against the Moderns not infrequently appear. The mass of the people are conservative and orthodox, and are under the domination of the old teachers of worship who are very conservative. Still further apart, stands the movement of Hajj Sālim, a very gifted but very erratic man, who tries through the "Sarekat Islām"³ and the Islām Hindiyah

naqtaja dschemi'i. The work treats also of the fight against superstitions and against belief on authority, of the demand for the right of independent investigation, the unity of Islām in politics and canon law, &c. Cf. op. cit., p. 72. All the foregoing ideas are common places of the 'Abduh school.

¹ Dr. Kraemer, who is a Ph. D. of Leiden University, 1921, has for a number of years been Agent of the Netherlands Bible Society in the East Indies. Special thanks for his interesting and valuable account are due, not only to him, but also to Dr. A. H. Prüssner (Ph.D., Chicago University, 1920), of Tebing, Tinggi Deli, Sumatra, Dutch East Indies, through whose kindness the statement was secured.

² The 'Muhammadiya' is one of the special Islāmic unions designed to advance cultural and religious aims among the Muslims of Malaysia. Cf. *Enc. Islām*, art. 'Sarekat Islām', by C. C. Berg. The 'Irshād' ('Guidance') is a similar movement.

³ The 'Sarekat Islām' is a political combination of Muhammadan Indonesians, founded in 1910. Its object was 'to secure for the native element a more prominent position, socially, politically, and economically, at the same time retaining Islām, which is the natural bond that links together the

Congresses to direct the minds of the people in a Pan-Islāmic direction. The militantly orthodox, especially the Arabs, give particular vent to their anger against the Moderns by calling them "Wahhābīs".¹

Muḥammad 'Abduh thus appears as one of the commanding figures of the past century. As scholar, writer, patriot, man of public affairs, he left his mark upon his age, and in these respects he is deserving of comparison with the great men of his day in other lands. But it is in his character as reformer that he appears as truly great; for, as Zaidān remarks, there arise in any one nation, however long its history, but a very small number of individuals who attempt such reforms as he attempted.² He did not live to see the fruition of his endeavours; but he set in motion influences which outlived him. 'He died', said a contemporary writer, 'in the midst of the breaking of the new day which his doctrines and principles have brought to pass in the Muslim world.'³ That the coming of this day seems even yet remote and uncertain, only testifies to the far-sightedness of his vision, and establishes more firmly his position among the great leaders and reformers of Islām.

very diverse elements of a great part of the native population of the Dutch East Indies'. *Enc. Islām*, art. 'Sarekat Islām'.

¹ It is significant that in Egypt the same name was applied to the party of Muḥammad 'Abduh, by way of opprobrium and ridicule. Cf. Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 336. ² *Mushāhīr*, i. 284. ³ *Tārīkh*, iii. 42.

CHAPTER V

MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH: DOCTRINES

Principles and Tendencies

SOME account of the leading ideas of Muḥammad 'Abduh has been given in the preceding pages, more particularly those which illustrate his various activities and the development of his thought. A somewhat more systematic and comprehensive summary of his characteristic teachings seems essential, however, for a fuller understanding of his thought and the value of his contribution to Islām. This will be attempted in the present chapter. The literary works from which such a summary must be drawn may be found in the appendix on bibliography. The present survey cannot claim to be original, in the sense of being the first account of his thought-system to be given, inasmuch as three noteworthy studies, covering his works in whole or in part, have preceded. Goldziher, in his work *Die Richtungen der islamischen Koran-auslegung*, in the chapter entitled 'Der islamische Modernismus und seine Koran-auslegung' (pp. 310-70), has given an account of Muḥammad 'Abduh's method in interpretation of the Qur'ān and some of the results attained. In the introduction to the French translation of *Risālat al-tawḥīd* made by M. Michel and Shaikh Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq, two excellent summaries of the ideas of Muḥammad 'Abduh are given: first, of his ideas on religion in general, and second, of the ideas contained in his *Risālat al-tawḥīd* (pp. xliii-lxxxv). Finally, Professor M. Horten has compiled a fairly exhaustive summary of *The Thought-world of Muḥammad 'Abduh* ('Die Gedankenwelt von Muhammad Abduh') in the second part of his study of 'Muhammad Abduh: sein Leben und seine theologisch-philosophische Gedankenwelt', in *Beiträge zur Kenntniss des Orients*, xiv (1917), 74-128. The first part of his study, dealing with the biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh, occurs in the preceding volume of the same periodical. In his study, Professor Horten limits himself strictly to a consideration of the world-view of Muḥammad 'Abduh, although an investigation of his activity as a preacher and social worker,

he believes, promises greater results (xiii. 85). The present study, while taking full account of the preceding investigations and depending upon them in many respects, as will be sufficiently evident, is yet based directly upon the Arabic sources.

Horten's Estimate of Muḥammad 'Abduh.

Of the three studies just mentioned, it is that of Professor Horten's, which has aimed to survey the thought of Muḥammad 'Abduh as a whole. It is natural, therefore, that he should be the one to express an opinion of Muḥammad 'Abduh as a thinker, and attempt an estimate of the value of his actual accomplishments in the fields of theology and philosophy. In general, it may be said that he does not rank him among the great thinkers of Islām. Bringing to the study of his works the point of view of the Western student of Islām who sees the opportunity, in this critical period of its development, for a scientific criticism of the whole system of philosophy and theology, and an adjustment and restatement of the same to meet the present situation, with possibly some new contributions to the solution of the problems of present-day thought, Horten seems conscious of a disappointment that Muḥammad 'Abduh has not proved equal to the task, as some of the great intellects of the past might have done. 'Fate', he says, 'has not afforded us, the historians of the West who follow the intellectual development of the East, the spectacle of the rise in Islām, at this period of the penetration of modern culture, of an outstanding thinker such as Ibn Sīnā, who should wrestle with the new problems of culture, overcome the old in its moribund constituents, develop it further in its good and solid fundamentals, and clearly recognize and try to solve at least the chief problems of modern knowledge of the world' (xiv. 128). 'Abduh's methods are not sufficiently objective and scientific, and therefore his results are deficient. 'Not once does he undertake the search for a solid critique of knowledge' (ibid., p. 128). 'Pure science one cannot find in him, philosophy is for him almost a defection from the faith. To seek in him questions of world view of scientific content is therefore almost a fruitless undertaking' (xiii. 85). What

one does find in him is 'only the elimination of that which has been overcome by the spirit of progress, not the building up of a new thought world' (xiv. 128).

Wherein Muhammad 'Abduh did attempt to restate problems of philosophy and theology, he met with only partial success, according to Horten. In so far as he pointed out the insufficiency of the old and cleared its ruins out of the way, he did succeed in preparing the way for modern scientific thought and culture. 'But it is easy to understand', says Horten, 'that in so doing he has swept aside much that is good, and the remaining content of ideas is much narrower than that of earlier times. . . . Much that was thrown away will have to be taken up again' (xiv. 82, 83). And again: 'How much that is unacceptable still shackles the flight of his thought! There still remains fundamental rubbish to be carted away in order to create room for a new building' (ibid., p. 128).

This generally unfavourable estimate is, it is true, only a part of what Horten has to say. He himself suggests other considerations which tend to set the accomplishments of Muhammad 'Abduh in more favourable light. His chief significance 'lies not in the field of science but in that of religious awakening' (xiii. 85). Another essential element in his significance is to be found in the fact that he recognized the insufficiency and non-finality of the scholastic philosophy and saw the opportunity which was thereby offered for the formulation of a modern philosophy (ibid., pp. 86, 87). While he accomplished something less than could have been hoped for in reconstructing the thought of modern Islām, yet 'it would be a great injustice', Horten admits, 'to expect of an Oriental completed results in fields in which the West itself is still far from such results. Muhammad 'Abduh had to reckon with his environment and was dependent on it. Its surpassing backwardness allows the work of our reformer to appear in all the clearer light, and makes us forgive him many failings' (xiv. 128). He does Shaikh 'Abduh still further justice by saying that when the modern method of thought has been learned, as against the medieval scholastic method, it will appear that the first fundamental elimination

accomplished by him will not have been too great a mistake (ibid., p. 83). Yet the fact remains, that he reached only a preliminary stage in the progress towards a reasonable basis for modern thought and culture (ibid., p. 82); and that the final and sufficient work, in logic and philosophy as well as in theology, yet remains to be written, after Islām has more fully assimilated the new culture of which it is now only beginning to take account (ibid., p. 78).

Horten's estimate has been given at length, because it is the carefully considered view of an eminent scholar whose special field is the development of Islāmic theological and philosophical thought. Further, it furnishes a possible point of view from which to judge the work of Muḥammad 'Abduh. It proposes to consider him in the capacity of a scholar and thinker, who was given an opportunity, in a critical period of the development of Islām, to weigh the thought of the past centuries of its history in the scales of modern scientific knowledge, to sift and test and eliminate, to conserve and develop and reshape, to assimilate the modern achievements of the West and adjust the thought of the past to the present—all to be organized into a reasoned and ordered system of thought which should combine the best of the old and the new, and prove itself the self-evidencing work of a master mind. There is much to be said for the desirability of such an ideal development of Islāmic thought. Something of the sort, it may be admitted, requires to be done, whether by one man or by a succession of men, in order to preserve Islām as a system of thought and philosophy which will endure the test of present-day knowledge. That Muḥammad 'Abduh failed to accomplish this, except in an approximate degree, may, perhaps, be the consideration which is given principal weight in determining the value of his contribution to Islām.

Relation between Muḥammad 'Abduh's Thought and his Activities.

At the same time, the point of view just sketched would seem, when Muḥammad 'Abduh's career as a whole is considered, to be somewhat too scholastic and detached. In particular, it is doubtful whether sufficient weight has been

attached to the vital relation which existed between the character of his thought and his activities as a reformer. For Muḥammad 'Abduh, perhaps unfortunately for the systematic development of Islāmic thought, was no cloistered scholar and thinker. It is true that he began his career as a Ṣūfī theologian-philosopher, speculating in detached abstraction upon the problems which have ever concerned the school-men, yet with a growing knowledge of, and interest in, the problems of modern science. Had he continued in the undisturbed career of a scholar, it is conceivable that he might have founded a new school of philosophy which would have mediated successfully between the thought of the past and that of the present. But he soon became absorbed in the manifold activities of public life which left little leisure for study. Thereafter, throughout his subsequent career, his work of writing and teaching paralleled his public activities, and the two spheres naturally reacted upon one another; or rather, both were dominated by the supreme purpose of his life, which was the reform and revivification of Islām and the rehabilitation of Muslim peoples.

It may not be amiss to recur once more to the actual situation as it presented itself to Muḥammad 'Abduh. The problem of the reform of Islām, as he conceived it, was by no means a simple one. The actual condition of the Muslim people was one of great backwardness. Politically, they were for the most part subject to non-Muslim powers, and, even where not directly under foreign rule, were yet subject to foreign influence. The spirit of these decadent nations must be aroused, and they must again be united in the consciousness of a common Islāmic brotherhood and of a common heritage as Muslims. Their social, moral, and intellectual condition was deplorable; they were subject to many weaknesses and ills and the victims of many degrading customs, which were no part of the religion of Islām, but rather were the result of their ignorance of the true Islām and their failure to practise even what they knew. The cure for these many ills, as he conceived it, lay in a return to the true Islām.¹

But what is the true Islām to which the various Muslim

¹ Cf. above, p. 60.

peoples must once more be summoned? As a matter of fact, he recognized, Muslims are hopelessly divided into sects, each one of which claims to be the true one. Moreover, he felt, the religion of Islām as conceived by the doctors of the schools has become so vast and complex a system, that it is difficult for any one, particularly if he be an uneducated person, to know just what Islām is. Under such conditions, the only hope for a revival of Islām lies in the recovery of the essentials of that religion, the minimum of beliefs without which Islām would not be Islām, the true Islām which all could recognize as such, and upon which all could unite. Still further, a new intellectual awakening must be fostered, by the promotion of education among the masses of the people, and by the pursuit of modern scientific studies, in order that Muslim nations may be able to compete with Western nations. For there is nothing in the spirit of modern civilization or in modern scientific attainments that is contrary to the true Islām—if Islām be but properly understood and properly stated. The necessity for such a statement that will be in harmony with modern science, calls again for the recovery of what is essential and abiding in Islām, and not merely of temporary or local application. In particular, there is need for a revision of the system of canon law, which is also an essential part of Islām, that its adaptability as an instrument of government under modern conditions may be practically demonstrated.

Thus the problem was not merely one of the alleviation or palliation of existing evils by the introduction of a few evident reforms, after the manner of some reformers; nor yet one of merely restating the theology and philosophy of Islām, after the manner of the schools. It was the still more difficult and essential one of, on the one hand, reforming the religion and restoring it to the simplicity and effectiveness of its early days, and, on the other, of effecting the return of the masses of the people to a sincere and enthusiastic acceptance and practice of this pure religion. It was a question of reviving Islām in new power, that thereby the Muslim peoples might be rescued from their evil state and thus the glory of the early days might be restored.

By what means could this reformation be accomplished?

Jamāl al-Dīn had advocated the way of political revolution. Others believed that the only hope lay in the general adoption of Western learning and Western customs. To Muḥammad 'Abduh, the only method which held any hope of success was that of a general religious awakening in every Muslim country. Thus, in referring to the efforts of enlightened individuals in Persia, India, Arabia, and later in Egypt, about the middle of the last century, to discover the causes of the ills of Muslims and their remedy, he states that the objective of all of them 'consisted in making use of the confidence which a Muslim has in his religion in setting in order the affairs of this religion'. Stated more fully, this purpose may be said to consist in 'the correction of the articles of belief and the removal of the mistakes which have crept into them through misunderstanding of the basic texts of the religion, in order that, when once the beliefs have been made free of harmful innovations, the activities of Muslims may, as a result, be made free from disorder and confusion, the conditions of the individual Muslims may be improved, their understanding enlightened by the true sciences, both religious and secular, and wholesome traits of character developed; and that this desirable state may communicate itself through the individuals to the nation as a whole'. This is the purpose which those who desire reform have in mind when they summon Muslims to a knowledge of their religion, or advocate religious education, or deplore the present corrupt state of Muslims. 'For to attempt reform by means of a culture or philosophy that is not religious in character, would require the erection of a new structure, for which neither materials nor workmen are available. If the religion of Muslims can work these ends and has their confidence, why seek for other means?'¹

Character of his Kur'ān Commentary.

This conception of his task and the means for accomplishing it, is consistently evident throughout all that he wrote, with the possible exception of his earliest philosophical treatise, *Al-wāridāt*. It might, indeed, be expected that this

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 477, second reply to M. Hanotaux; also in *Al-Islām wa al-radd 'alā muntakidih*, Cairo, 1343/1925, p. 76.

practical purpose would appear in his occasional contributions to the newspapers of Egypt and Syria, his articles in the *Journal Officiel* and *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, and in his controversial writings. But it appears no less fundamentally in his *Commentary on the Qur'ān*, which, in Goldziher's view, 'represents the essence of the theological teaching propagated by Jamāl al-Dīn and Muḥammad 'Abduh'.¹ It might not, perhaps, be out of the way to describe this *Commentary* as both practical and devotional in character. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, who developed Shaikh 'Abduh's lectures on the Qur'ān into the form in which they appear in his *Commentary*, claims that it provides an interpretation 'in a spiritual sense suitable to civilization (*'alā ṭarīkah rūḥiyyah 'umrāniyyah*), by which it will be proven that the wise Qur'ān is for every age the source of religious and social well-being (*al-sa'ādāt al-dīniyyah wa al-madaniyyah*)'.² This same writer, in his introduction to the revised edition of the earlier portion of the *Commentary* points out that the greater part of previous interpretation of the Qur'ān has obscured its real character as a revelation of light and guidance and a means for the purification of men's souls.³ Muḥammad 'Abduh, on the contrary, in his lectures sought to emphasize its true character; he placed the primary emphasis 'upon the guidance of the Qur'ān, in a manner which agrees with the verses which describe it, and with the warnings and good tidings and guidance and correction for which it was sent down', at the same time giving care 'to the requirements of present-day conditions with respect to acceptability of phrasing, and having regard for the capacity of different classes of readers in understanding'.⁴

Character of his Theology.

It is in his mature work of theology, *Risālat al-tawḥīd*, that a full and considered exposition of his theological and philosophical system, if he had such, might reasonably be expected.

¹ *Koranauslegung*, p. 325.

² *Al-Manār*, vi. 198; viii. 899, quoted by Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 344.

³ *Al-Manār*, xxviii (1927), 647.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 650. Cf. fuller statement regarding the *Commentary* below, Chapter VIII.

If the *Risālah* were intended to be such, it is surprisingly brief, and still more, even popular in form. He tells, in the introductory pages, of the genesis of this work, and of the purpose which he had in mind in its composition. He relates that, in giving lectures on theology to several classes of students in the Sulṭāniyyah School in Bairūt, he found the existing works on theology to be unsuitable for his purpose: they were either above the comprehension of his students, or were otherwise not beneficial, or had been written for a different age from the present. He therefore decided to dictate to them something more applicable to their time and conditions. He adopted a simple and easy method: first, to give an introduction, or preliminary statement, and then proceed from that to necessary statements on different subjects, with regard only to the correctness of the proofs, even though the result might be different from the accustomed manner of composition in such treatises. Any reference that was made to differences of belief, was made 'from a distance, so that no one, perhaps, except the well informed would understand'. He kept no copy of his lectures, and when, finally, after years spent in work of another sort, he again had opportunity to give lectures on theology in the Azhar, he was obliged to apply to his brother, Ḥamūdah Bey 'Abduh, who had been a student of the first year at Bairūt when the lectures were first given, for a copy of his notes on the lectures. These, he found, were suitable to the purpose which he now had in mind. The material was 'what one who knew little about theology would need, and, at the same time, one who knew a great deal might not find that it could be dispensed with; in spite of its brevity, which was intended, and a restricted and limited form of statement which followed the method of the early fathers (*salaf*) in articles of belief, and paid no attention to the opinions of later generations (*khalaf*), and kept away from the differences between the sects'. Taking these notes as a basis for his lectures, he revised them by expansion or compression, as seemed 'suitable in such a brief summary'. The results were presented in his *Risālah*—'in the hope that its brevity would not cause it to be neglected, or its worth undervalued'.¹

¹ *Risālat al-tawḥīd*, 5th ed., Cairo, 1346/1926-7, pp. 2-4.

Expressions occur here and there throughout the work which further indicate his purpose. Thus, in discussing the 'Mission of the Prophets' (p. 97), he says: 'We are not concerned to give what has been said by either early or late writers on this subject. But we adhere to what has been our practice hitherto in these brief pages, of giving an explanation of what is believed, and effecting this along the simplest lines, without paying regard to the opinions held by those who differ, or the views settled upon by those who agree, except possibly a veiled reference of a sort that could not be dispensed with in a definite statement.' And again, in his exposition of the nature of Islām (p. 168), he says: 'I am giving a summary in this section, following the example of the Kūr'ān in committing to men of discernment the matter of supplying the details.' One more reference of this sort may be given. In concluding his discussion of men's acts with reference to the question of free will, he says that he does not pursue the matter any further 'because of the lack of necessity for it as concerns soundness of faith, and the inability of the minds of the commonalty to comprehend the matter in its essence, however much may be done by way of explanation; and because the hearts of the majority of the people have been infected by the religious leaders with the disease of blind acceptance of belief on the authority of others (*taḳlīd*)'. The character of this work as a whole has been well summed up by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā when he says: 'The centuries have passed, and there has been no work which was suitable as a presentation of a summons to Islām in the form required by the dogmatic theologians . . . until Muḥammad 'Abduh came and wrote *Risālat al-tauḥīd*.'¹ Elsewhere he remarks that had it not been for the title and the technical terms of scholastic theology contained in the introductory section, which may have discouraged some readers who thought that it was a catechism like that of Al-Sanūsī, or a work on dogmatic theology intended for the theologians, the work would have had a much larger circulation than it has had. And he adds that Muḥammad 'Abduh had intended simplifying the introduction and writing it in more popular

¹ *Risālat al-tauḥīd*, publisher's preface, p. 'y'.

form, like the section on 'Prophecy', and other sections less given to logical proof.¹

It may be added that, in thus subordinating what he wrote to a practical end and accommodating it to the classes whom he wished to influence, he was not governed simply by considerations of policy, but was also acting in accordance with a natural characteristic. He confesses that he used to envy Jamāl al-Dīn his ability to expound his ideas to any audience, whether favourably disposed or otherwise; while he himself, on the contrary, was always influenced, in his speaking and teaching, by considerations of time and place and audience, and never felt himself moved to speak unless he felt that there was a place for what he had to say. This was true also of his writing. When he addressed himself to collecting his thoughts on a subject, he found his mind full of many ideas. Then the thought would occur, 'To whom am I addressing these words and who will profit by them?' and thereupon his writing would come to a standstill, and the ideas that had collected themselves in his mind seemed to devour one another until all had disappeared, and the result was that nothing was written.² It was the instinct to which he thus gives expression which marked him as a wise teacher, who, to use his own expression, 'has in his hand a scale by which to weigh the mind of the student and the degree of his readiness to receive what the teacher is saying'.³

It is sufficiently evident from the foregoing, that the form of statement in which his views on religion and theology are cast was determined by his desire to make what he conceived to be the simplest and most essential form of Islām available for the masses of the people. It is not necessarily to be concluded from this, that he summarily dismissed, as useless or mistaken, all the theological positions attained in the centuries of Islāmic development except those which he explicitly approves in his writings. He admits, as noted above, that he is giving a summary form of the doctrines which he considers essential, and trusts that those who are familiar with

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 493, 494.

² *Ibid.*, p. 390, quoted also in *Al-Manār*, xxix. 53.

³ *Tafsīr sūrat al-'aṣr wa khīṭāb 'āmm*, 2nd ed., Cairo, 1330/1911. p. 68.

theology will fill in the details from their own knowledge. But if the reader is not familiar with the endless discussions which go to make up the mass of theological teachings, he does not deem it essential that he should be burdened with them in order to know what Islām really is. His teachings throughout presuppose the body of orthodox theology, and show familiarity with and dependence upon, not only the acknowledged masters, but also some of the less distinguished writers.¹ In general, it may be said that his theology did not differ greatly, in essential content, from the accepted theology, if the wide range of views comprised within the limits of Islāmic theology be borne in mind. 'He kept always within the limits of Islām,' says Michel, 'and even of Muslim orthodoxy, if by orthodoxy be meant the schools which kept the closest to the sources and which, in the explication of those sources, followed a golden mean among the different extremist tendencies.'² Where his teaching differed, the difference was mainly one of emphasis. In some respects, as, for example, in the honour and dignity accorded to Muḥammad and the Kūr'ān, and in his strict views of inspiration, he was extremely orthodox.³ In other points, as in regard to prophecy and the occurrence of miracles, while retaining an essentially orthodox view, he sought to present a modernized and rationalized statement.⁴ In still others, as in regard to the reputed miracles of saints, and certain details regarding the Hereafter, and matters based upon traditions of varying authenticity, he allowed considerable liberty for individual interpretation.⁵ It was his attitude towards the canon law of Islām which particularly contravened the prevailing view.⁶

Some indication of his generally orthodox attitude, other than a detailed survey of his teaching, is afforded by the fact that he deplored the general ignorance of the Arabic language which prevented Muslims from knowing what is in the books

¹ As, e.g. Isfarā' inī (d. 1078. Cf. Brockelmann, i. 387, 388), whom he curiously follows, says Horten, in his *Commentary* on Sūrat al-Fātiḥah. Cf. *Beiträge*, xiv. 86.

² *Risālah*, p. lxxxiv.

³ Cf. *Beiträge*, xiv. 117; *Koranauslegung*, pp. 346-8: Cf. also below, Chapter VIII.

⁴ Cf. *Risālah*, pp. lxxi, lxxviii.

⁵ On miracles of the saints, cf. Michel, p. lxxviii; on the other two items cf. *Risālah*, 5th ed., p. 224; Michel, translation, pp. 137, 138. Cf. also below, Chapter VIII.

⁶ Cf. below, Chapter VIII.

of their religion, and made it one of his primary aims to revive a general knowledge of the language as a means to the reform of religion.¹ It is the duty of the believer, he taught, to know the articles of faith, and as a means to that end, to be familiar with the *Catechism of Al-Sanūsī* and to be able to enumerate at least twenty of the attributes of God.² But he objected to making the books of theology the sole, or even the primary, source of a knowledge of religion. In his comment on chapter ii of the *Qur'ān*, verse 210, he addresses words of censure directly to the teachers of religion, 'those who are learned in the official forms'; 'ye have taught the people to be satisfied with a knowledge of the faith learned from the theological treatises of Al-Sanūsī and Al-Nasafi. But the source of faith is the Book of God.'³

In part, the brief form of his theological teaching is due to his sense of the futility of many of the discussions which have rent asunder the unity of Islām, and his earnest desire to restore that unity. This aversion to discussion which he felt had gained little, appears more than once in his *Risālah*. In the section on 'Human Actions', after showing briefly that man is conscious of the power of choice but must recognize that the power of God overshadows all his actions, he concludes by observing that any investigation beyond this, by way of attempting to harmonize the actions of man as a free agent and the all-embracing knowledge and will of God, must be characterized as 'an attempt to pry into the secrets of Destiny, which we have been forbidden to plunge into and busying oneself with that which reason is almost incapable of attaining. The extremists of every religion, especially of Christianity and Islām, have gone deeply into it. But, after prolonged disputations, they still find themselves at the point where they began; and the most that they have accomplished is to create divisions and sects among themselves.'⁴

In like manner, he compares those who have wrestled and wrangled with one another in their 'foolish disquisitions' on the subject of whether it is incumbent upon God to do what

¹ Cf. above, p. 85.

² Cf. *Beiträge*, xiv. 120.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 89, 90.

⁴ *Risālah*, 5th ed., p. 67; Michel, translation, p. 43.

is best for his creatures, to a company of brothers who were travelling towards a common destination but who took different routes. In the darkness they happened later to come together, but each mistook the other for an enemy who was intent upon robbing him of his possessions. Thus strife waxed hot among them, and they continued to belabour one another until, one by one, all had fallen, without any of them having reached his destination. But when the morning light appeared, and countenances could be recognized, good sense returned to those who had survived. But had recognition occurred beforehand, they would have aided one another in attaining their common desire, and their goal would have been gained, all of them, in fraternal fashion, being guided by the light of truth.¹

Another element which tended to influence his theological discussions and to confine them within definite limits, was his marked intellectual caution which, at times, amounted to scepticism and agnosticism. While according to reason a primary place in religion, as will be noted later, he yet thought it the part of wisdom to acknowledge the limits beyond which human reason cannot go. In some subjects the limits of human thought are soon reached. This attitude is particularly evident in his discussion of the attributes of God.² He introduces the section by quoting a tradition, the general meaning of which, even if the tradition itself be not genuine, is confirmed, he declares, by the general sense as well as the detailed teaching of the *Qur'ān*. The tradition is: 'Reflect upon the creation of God, but do not reflect upon His essence, lest ye perish.'

To illustrate the truth of this tradition and to show how impossible it is to know the real nature of God, he appeals to the so-called 'Atomic Theory' of the philosophers.

The utmost that the mind of man can attain, he says, regarding the nature of existing things, is to know only the accidents of certain things which come within his comprehension by means of his senses or his emotions or by process of reasoning; by these

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 58, 59; Michel, translation, pp. 37, 38.

² *Ibid.*, the section 'General Remarks on the Attributes', pp. 52 sqq.; Michel, translation, pp. 34 sqq.

means he is able to arrive at a knowledge of the sources of these accidents. He is able also to learn the general principles involved in the classification of things, and some of the laws governing the processes which befall them. But as for penetrating to the real nature of any existing reality, this is beyond his power; because the discovery of the nature of compound substances consists only in the discovery of the nature of the elements of which it is composed. And this goes only as far as the pure atom, the real nature of which there is no means of discovering, of necessity. The most that can be known regarding it is its accidents and its effects. Take light, for example, the most evident of things: in spite of many scientific facts and details which have been learned concerning it, its real nature remains unknown; the scientist knows only what every one knows who has two eyes. God has so ordered it that it is not necessary for man to know the real nature of things, but only their accidents and their peculiar properties. The sane mind takes pleasure simply in determining the relation of these properties to the things to which they belong, and in understanding the rules upon which this relationship is founded. To be busied, therefore, with seeking to discover the nature of things, is a waste of time and an expenditure of mental powers for a purpose for which they were not given.¹

In another direction man finds his knowledge limited, namely, in regard to his own soul, that thing which is nearest of all things to himself.

He has sought to know some of its accidents, and whether it is itself an accident or a substance; whether it comes into existence before the body or after it; whether it is inherent in the body or independent of it. Reason has not succeeded in establishing anything regarding these characteristics which can gain general assent; but the sum total of man's efforts amounts only to this, that he knows that he exists, that he is living, and that he possesses feeling and will. Beyond this, all the certain facts which he knows are reducible to those accidents of which he has gained knowledge by his intuition. But the real nature of any of these matters, or even the manner in which he possesses some of his characteristics, all this is unknown to him, nor can he find any means of learning it.²

This, he continues, is the state of man's mind in regard to that

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 52-4; Michel, translation, pp. 34, 35. Cf. also remarks, *Introd.*, p. lix.

² *Ibid.*, p. 54; Michel, translation, p. 35.

which is on the same level of existence with himself, or on a lower level. Still more, this is true likewise of those actions which he supposes to proceed from himself, such as thinking, and its connexion with movement and speech. What, then, must be his state of mind with reference to that Supreme Existence? What must be his perplexity, nay, his sense of powerlessness, when he turns his attention to that Infinite Existence, which is without beginning and without end?¹

The conclusion of this line of reasoning, the author states in terms which recall the tradition quoted at the beginning of the section. After speaking of the benefits which are to be derived from a study of 'the creation of God', he says:

'But to reflect upon the essence of the Creator, is, in one respect, an attempt to penetrate its reality; and this is forbidden to the human intellect, because of the severance of all relation between the two existences (i.e. between God and his creatures), and because of the impossibility of composition of parts in his essence. In another respect, to reflect about it is to proceed to lengths which the power of man cannot reach. It is, therefore, futile and harmful: futile, because it is an endeavour to comprehend the incomprehensible; harmful, because it leads to confusion of belief, for it is the definition of what it is not permissible to define, and the limitation of what it is not proper to limit.'²

'It is sufficient for us', he continues, 'to know that God possesses these attributes. Anything beyond that, He has concealed within His own knowledge, and it is not possible for our reason to attain to it. For this reason, the *Qur'ān* and previous books only direct attention to that which has been created, that thereby we may arrive at a knowledge of the existence of the Creator and His attributes of perfection. But as for the manner in which He possesses these attributes, this it is not our province to examine into. . . . Whether the attributes are distinct from His essence, and whether His speech is an attribute different from the ideas of the heavenly books which are comprised within His knowledge, and whether His hearing and His vision are something else than His knowledge of what is seen and heard, and similar questions about which speculative theologians have differed and concerning which divergent schools of thought have arisen, all these are matters which it is not allowable to delve into, since it is not possible for

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 35; Michel, translation, p. 35.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 55, 56; Michel, translation, pp. 36.

human reason to attain to them. And to set up proof for any of them from the expressions which occur in the revealed texts, indicates weakness of intellect, and is a use of the Divine Law which is deceiving; for our use of language is not confined strictly within the limits of reality; and if it were, the forms of expression which we use are not such as would be required by regard for the real nature of things. Such views are but the opinions of schools of philosophy; even if the best of the philosophers be not in error in these views, at any rate, no school has arrived at a statement of them which is convincing. What, then, is our duty but to stop short at the limit which our reason can compass, and to ask God to forgive those who have believed in what His apostles, who have preceded us, and who have delved into these matters, have revealed.¹

In regard to the question of predestination also, he showed a spirit of caution. Reference has already been made to his belief that much useless discussion has taken place on the subject. He seems also to have had the feeling that a proper religious attitude concerning it necessitated a becoming caution. 'The desire to investigate this subject', he says in his comment on Sūrat Al-'Aṣr (Sūrah ciii. 3), 'is a species of deficiency in perseverance or is due to entire loss of it.' Later, after defining what he considers the proper attitude to assume, he says: 'I do not like to talk on this subject more than this, otherwise I shall have ceased to be one of the persevering, and have plunged into the depths of predestination (*al-ḡadar*) along with the others who do so.'²

His Attitude towards Philosophy.

Some of the same characteristics which have been noted in regard to his theology are discernible in his attitude towards philosophy. Here also his practical purpose was determinative. It was largely due to the practical reasons which have been given that he did not deal with logic or with any other part of philosophy, as Horten has noted, in a systematic and scientific manner.³ He did not, in fact, leave behind any considerable work which may be regarded as strictly philosophical in method and content. His earliest work, *Al-wāridāt*, was one of much promise; in it he dealt with the truths of

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 56, 57; Michel, translation, pp. 36, 37.

² *Al-Manār*, vi. 589, 590.

³ *Beiträge*, xiv. 78.

dogmatic theology, says Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, in a manner which 'combines the 'Irfān, the Gnosis, of the Ṣūfis with the logical proof of the philosophers'.¹ Outside of this brief work, it is only in the earlier pages of his work on theology, the *Risālah*, that he follows in any definite manner the methods of the philosophers. In addition, however, note should be made of his attempt to revive interest in logic by his commentary on an important but difficult work in that field; and to his lectures on Ibn Khaldūn, and his 'Treatise on the Unity of Existence' which were never published.² His pages throughout, moreover, show undoubted familiarity with the philosophers; and it would be easy to over-estimate his seeming lack of interest in philosophy; although the statement that he did not in his works treat it in a systematic and scientific manner remains true.

This partial and imperfect treatment of philosophy may be attributed to an aversion to it on religious grounds, as has been done, seemingly, by Horten when he says that 'philosophy was to him almost a defection from the faith'.³ There is considerable justification for such a conclusion in the rather contemptuous remarks of Muḥammad 'Abduh, quoted above, on the 'opinions of schools of philosophy', and the errors, or at least the unconvincing statements, of even the best of the philosophers. Yet it is possible to find in the particular subject with which he is there concerned, a reason for his unfavourable opinion. He considers the subject of the attributes of God to be beyond the reach of human reason; even the philosophers, therefore, cannot adequately deal with it. While thus protesting against their errors in this regard, he at the same time borrows from a metaphysical theory elaborated by them its demonstration of the inaccessibility of substance, to show that their methods break down when applied to the nature of God.⁴

It would be difficult to account for his early enthusiasm for philosophy, especially during his association with Jamāl al-Dīn, and the fact that he did do some work, however

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 5.

² Cf. *Beiträge*, xiii. 85.

⁴ Cf. *Risālah*, translation, p. 37; also *Introd.*, p. lix.

³ Cf. Appendix on Bibliography.

partial, in this field, if he considered it a defection from the faith. It was because of the revival of philosophy, in part at least, that he and Jamāl were suspected and opposed by the orthodox; and by his friends and admirers he was regarded as its leading modern exponent.¹ Furthermore, in one of his early articles in *Al-Abrām*, on 'Speculative Theology and the Demand for the Contemporary Sciences', he writes in defence of the study of logic and philosophy which was frowned upon by the orthodox. He says, in effect:

The science of logic has been developed for the purpose of setting up proofs and distinguishing ideas, and to show how the premises should be ordered to arrive at a conclusion after proof. Such a science deserves to be regarded as a means of approach to the dogmatic sciences. The conclusions of logic are only decisions meant to strengthen the decisions of religion by conclusive reasonable proofs, for the satisfaction of the searchers after knowledge and for the refutation of the deniers. . . . 'If we do not devote thought to setting up proofs and correcting them, and to the proper method of discovering truths and defining them, then to what shall we devote it? For if the right guidance which is ours now should escape us, and our correctness of belief were to disappear, could we recover a knowledge of it again by anything except by proof?'²

In the introduction to the *Risālah*, he has given a brief survey of the historical development of dogma in Islām which is unique among Muslim scholars, in showing an approach to the modern critical method. What he has to say about the development of philosophy not only reveals his thought regarding philosophy, but illustrates also his general attitude of mind. Because of its importance in this connexion, it is given here in full.

'As for the schools of philosophy', he says, 'they deduced their opinions by the exercise of pure thought; and the greatest of the speculative philosophers had no other aim than the acquisition of

¹ Cf. above, pp. 7, 98. One account which rather extravagantly praises him as 'the Pole of the sphere of philosophy' may be taken as typical of much that was said of him, even by responsible writers. *Tārīkh*, iii. 71, quoted in *Beiträge*, xiii. 85, n. 1.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 60. Cf. above, p. 38.

knowledge and the satisfaction of the curiosity of their minds in the discovery of the unknown or in ascertaining the nature of things that are amenable to reason. It was within their power to attain as much of their aims as they desired; for the body of the believers took them under their protection and allowed them the enjoyment of entire liberty in acquiring the delight of their minds, in advancing the arts, and in strengthening the corner-stones upon which the order of human society rests, by means of their discovery of the secrets which are concealed in the bosom of the universe. For these secrets are among the things which God gave us permission to acquire by our reason and thought, when He said: "He created for you all that is on Earth" (Sūrah ii. 27); since He made no exception in this statement of anything, whether manifest or concealed. No intelligent Muslim closed the way before them, nor placed obstacles in the path along which they were seeking right direction, in view of the place of prime importance to which the Qur'ān has raised reason, in that it has the final decision regarding the matter of happiness, and in the distinction between truth and falsehood, and between what is harmful and what is beneficial; and in view, also, of the genuine saying of the Prophet, "Ye are better informed (than I) concerning your secular affairs"; and in view, likewise, of the custom which he set before us in the expedition of Badr, of making use of such experiments as have proved trustworthy, and such opinions as have proved correct.

'Yet it is evident that two things got the better of most of the philosophers: first, their excessive admiration for what had reached them of the works of the Greek philosophers, especially of Aristotle and Plato, and the pleasure which they took in following them blindly, without discernment; and second, the spirit which held sway among the people at that time. This latter influence was the more ominous of the two: for they plunged into the disputes which were taking place among the speculative theologians in matters of religion, and, in spite of the fewness of their numbers, came into collision, by reason of their sciences, with the views which were tenaciously held by the mass of the people. Then the defenders of the faith rose up against them. Al-Ghazzālī came, and his disciples, and seized everything in the books of the philosophers that had to do with doctrines about God and general matters connected with them, and with the principles of substances and accidents, and with their views about matter and the composition of bodies, and, in short, everything

that the dogmatic theologians conceived of as having any bearing on the bases of religion ; and they subjected it all to bitter criticism. The later theologians went so far in following their example, that they were carried almost beyond the bounds of moderation. As a result, their position of influence was lost : the commonalty cast them aside, and the leading men paid no attention to them. Thus time brought to nought what the world of Islām had been expecting from their efforts.

'This is the reason why questions of theology are mingled with views of philosophy in the books of later writers, such as you find in the works of Al-Baiḍāwī, Al-'Aḍud, and others. It is the reason, furthermore, why various diverse speculative sciences have been combined and made into one science ; and why the study of this one science has been pursued, both as concerns its premises and its investigations, in accordance with a method that is nearer to thoughtless repetition than to critical research. Consequently, the progress of science came to a standstill.

'Then came the civil quarrels among the various lines which were contending for the kingdom. The ignorant gained the mastery, and destroyed any remaining traces of the speculative sciences that had had their source in the Muslim religion ; and the way became lost in devious by-paths. Those who study the books of that time will not find anything except discussions about words, and speculations about methods ; and this, moreover, only in a few books that weakness has chosen and impotence has preferred. Then intellectual confusion spread among the Muslims, under the tutelage of ignorant leaders. There arose those who imagined within themselves things that science had never taught, and laid down principles that had never previously been thought possible for Islām. Nevertheless, they found assistance in the general lack of education, and in the difficulty of access to the sources of Islām. They routed reason from its domain, and thought only of passing judgement on people as guilty of error and unbelief. They went to such lengths in this, that they imitated certain peoples who had preceded them, in asserting that there was enmity between science and religion. And they said, in the falsehoods to which their tongues gave utterance : "This is permitted, and this other thing forbidden" ; "this is unbelief, and this other thing is Islām" ; but Islām was far beyond what they imagined, and God was above what they conceived and described.

'But what has happened to the commonalty, in their religious beliefs and in the inner sources of their actions, as a consequence

of this long period of distraction and these numberless occasions of confusion? A great evil, and a universal calamity.

'This is a summary account of the history of this science (dogmatics), which shows how it was founded upon principles which are taken from the Perspicuous Book; but how, in the end, the hands of sectarians have played with it, until they have deflected it from its purpose and carried it beyond its limits.'¹

It may be gathered from the foregoing historical account, that Muḥammad 'Abduh felt that the proper sphere of philosophy, and the field in which it can render the greatest service, is in the investigation of the phenomena of nature, or to use his own phrase, 'the discovery of the secrets which are concealed in the bosom of the universe'. This field he elsewhere enlarges to include the facts of man's nature and of human history. From such study practical benefits may be expected, as he has indicated, particularly the advancements of the arts and the reinforcement of the order of society. That such practical benefits did not result for Islām was due to the fatal mistake, which the Muslim philosophers made, of entering the arena of religious discussions and attempting to apply their principles in that field. Had they not mixed up their arts with religion, says Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, in a note on the above account, and involved themselves in religious disputes, they would have been left to themselves to pursue their studies without interference, and, in that case, the sciences would have been advanced, and through them the arts would have been promoted and civilization would have become widespread. It was the opinion of Muḥammad 'Abduh, he says further, that philosophy and the secular sciences should not be mixed up with questions of religion.² This was not because he believed that science and religion are mutually antagonistic. This much he infers above and elaborates elsewhere. But the two fields should be kept distinct, partly because in the field of religion, particularly in regard to the nature of God, there are well-defined limits to what reason can accomplish, or even attempt, whereas, in the natural world, no such limits are imposed; and, partly, because the

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 20-4; Michel, translation, pp. 16-18.

² *Ibid.*, p. 21, n. 2.

handicap of religious intolerance and sectarian bias may throttle the spirit of independent investigation, as the history of Islām has shown. If 'Abduh did not develop philosophy scientifically and systematically, he was, in part at least, but observing his own distinction, since he had devoted himself to the task of promoting a religious revival.

CHAPTER VI

MUHAMMAD 'ABDUH: DOCTRINES (*cont.*)

Attitude regarding Reason and Science.

Religion and Reason.

THERE are two other questions which have appeared in the foregoing discussion, and which require some further elucidation, as they are essential to an understanding of 'Abduh's conception of Islām and his general attitude towards the modern world. These are, first: What did he conceive to be the relation which exists between reason and religion, or, more particularly, between reason and the religion of Islām? and, second: What of the relation between science and religion? Since these questions involve also his conception of the nature of religion and of science, respectively, it will be desirable to give a number of rather extensive quotations from his writings, beginning with the question of religion and reason.

The relation between the two is given briefly in his statement of the conception of the religion of Islām which he was endeavouring to inculcate: a religion, purified of all later growths and freed from sects and divisions; this religion, he says, should be considered 'as one of the checks upon human reason, which God has bestowed to hold men back from excesses and to lessen their errors'.¹ While religion thus supplements and aids reason, at the same time reason sits in judgement upon religion.

'Reason alone is not able to ascertain the causes which secure the happiness of nations, without a Divine director; just as an animal is not able to apprehend all the objects of sense by the sense of vision alone, but is in need, at the same time, of the sense of hearing, for example, to apprehend the objects of hearing. In like manner, religion is a general sense, the province of which is to discover means of happiness which are not clearly discernible by reason. But it is reason which has the final authority in the recognition of this sense, and in directing the exercise of it in the sphere for which it was given, and in the acceptance of the beliefs and

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 892; again in xxviii. 588. Cf. Michel, p. xlviii.

rules of conduct which this sense discovers for it. How can the right of reason to do this be denied, since it is reason which examines the proofs of these beliefs and rules of conduct, in order to arrive at a knowledge of them, and to be assured that they emanate of a certainty from God ?¹

Islām is pre-eminently a religion of reason. The Qur'ān has raised reason to a place of the first importance 'in that it has the final decision regarding the matter of happiness, and in the distinction between truth and falsehood, and between what is harmful and what is beneficial'.² Islām further recognizes that man is able by his intellect to arrive at a knowledge of God. In its summons to belief in the existence and unity of God, 'it depends only upon arousing the human intellect, and directing it to a consideration of the universe and the employment of true analogy, and a return to the order and arrangement of the universe and the consecutive linking up of causes and effects, in order to arrive thereby at the belief that the universe has one Maker, necessarily existent, knowing, wise, omnipotent; and that that Maker is one, in correspondence with the unity of the order seen in existing things. Thus it has set free the human intellect to follow the course which nature has made customary for it, without restriction, and aroused it to the consideration of creation and the various signs of God's power and goodness in nature, in order that, by reflection upon them, it might attain to the knowledge of God'.³ This attitude towards reason opened a wide field for speculation and inquiry, 'especially since the summons of Islām to reflection in regard to created things was not in any way limited or conditioned; because of the knowledge that every sound speculation leads to a belief in God as He is described in the Qur'ān, without over-emphasizing His transcendence or defining His nature'.⁴

Inasmuch as belief in the existence of God is a fundamental article of faith, and this belief is founded upon reason, the priority of reason in Islām is apparent. He emphasizes this

¹ *Risālah*, p. 142; Michel, translation, p. 88; cf. *Introd.*, p. xlviii.

² *Ibid.*, p. 20; Michel, translation, p. 16. Cf. above, p. 123.

³ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, 3rd ed., 1341/1922, p. 48 sqq.

⁴ *Risālah*, pp. 9, 10. Michel, translation, p. 7. Quoted by Horten, *Beiträge*, xiv. 80.

thought by saying: 'Thus in requiring faith in the existence and unity of God, Islām depends upon nothing but proof of the reason and human thought, which follows its natural order; it does not astonish you with miracles, nor extraordinary occurrences nor heavenly voices. . . . Muslims are generally agreed that belief in God precedes belief in the apostles. It is therefore not proper to arrive at belief in God as a result of the words of the prophets. On the contrary, one must believe in the existence of God before he can believe in the possibility of prophecy.'¹

It is thus the sphere of reason to test the messages and credentials of the prophets. It is significant that he attempts to give to it full authority in interpreting the revealed text. Thus, the second principle of Islām he gives as 'the precedence of reason over the literal meaning of the Divine Law in case of conflict between them'. In explanation of this he says: 'There is general agreement among Muslims that in case of conflict between reason and the evident meaning of what has been given by tradition (*naql*), the conclusions which have been arrived at by reason are to be given the preference. Two possibilities then remain in regard to the tradition: either, to acknowledge the genuineness of what has been given in this way, while confessing inability to understand it, and resigning the matter to God and His knowledge; or to interpret the tradition, while observing the laws of language, in such a way that it will agree in sense with what reason has established.'² In the *Risālah* he states the same rule, as applied to the interpretation of prophecy, in a slightly different manner. Perhaps this is due to a feeling that a more cautious statement is necessary in regard to prophecy, which can refer only to the sacred text of the Qur'ān, whereas, the Divine Law is more inclusive. It is the duty of reason, he says, after it has determined that a prophet is to be accepted as a true prophet, to believe all that he came to reveal, even though the true meaning of it cannot be understood. This does not mean that something logically impossible must be believed. The messages of the prophets cannot contain such impossibilities. But if the apparent sense of a passage

¹ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, p. 51.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 55.

contains what seems to be a contradiction, 'reason must believe that the apparent sense was not intended. It is then free to choose between interpreting the passage consistently with the rest of the words of the prophet in whose message the doubtful passage occurs, and between resigning the matter to God and His knowledge.'¹

In thus reaffirming what he believed to be the fundamental attitude of Islām in regard to reason, he was going contrary to what had been the established practice among Muslims for centuries, namely, *taḳlīd*, or the acceptance of belief on the authority of others, without question or objection. This, naturally, was expected of the mass of the people, who were held to be incapable of arriving at a reasoned statement of belief. But it was also the principle followed by the learned, both in their attitude towards religion itself, and in their treatment of all the Muslim sciences, as before noted.²

Against this spirit, Muḥammad 'Abduh had to struggle during his student days, and he opposed it throughout his life. 'I raised my voice', he says, 'to free the mind from the chains of belief on authority (*taḳlīd*).'³ 'Islām', he says in his *Risālah*, 'declares openly that man was not created to be led by a halter, but that it is his nature to be guided by science and by signs of the universe and the indications of events—and that teachers are only those who arouse and direct and guide into the way of investigation.'⁴ In his *Commentary*, on chapter ii, verse 243, of the *Ḳur'ān*, he says:

'How far those who believe in *taḳlīd* are from the guidance of the *Ḳur'ān*! It propounds its laws in a way that prepares us to use reason, and makes us people of insight. . . . It forbids us to submit to *taḳlīd*. But they command us to follow their words blindly; and if one attempts to follow the *Ḳur'ān* and Usage of the Prophet, they oppose him with denial, supposing that in so doing they are preserving the religion. On the contrary, nothing else but this has vitiated the religion; and if we continue to follow this method of blind acceptance, no one will be left who holds this religion. But if we return to that reason to which God directs us in this verse, and other verses like it, there is hope that we can

¹ *Risālah*, p. 143; Michel, translation, p. 88; cf. Michel, *Introd.*, p. xlviii.

² Cf. above, p. 28. ³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 892; quoted also, xxviii. 588.

⁴ *Risālah*, p. 175; Michel, translation, p. 107.

revive our religion. Thus it will be the religion of reason, to which all the nations shall have recourse.¹ 'Thus Islām set free the authority of the intellect from everything that had kept it in chains, and delivered it from all belief on authority that had kept it enslaved, and restored it to its kingdom, in which it should rule by its judgement and its wisdom; at the same time, submitting to God alone in what it does, and coming to a stop within the limits imposed by the Divine Law. But there is no limit to what may be done within its limits, and there is no end to the speculation that may be conducted under its standards.'²

At the same time, he does not spare trenchant criticism, and biting sarcasm and ridicule, in discrediting those who advocate blind acceptance of beliefs. 'The hearts of the mass of the people', he says, 'have been infected by the 'Ulamā with the disease of *taklīd*. For the 'Ulamā believe a certain thing, and then seek proofs for it; and they are not willing to have the proof be other than agreeable to what they believe. If a belief is advanced contrary to their belief, they proceed to combat it, even though this should lead to the negation of reason entirely. For most of them believe and then adduce their proofs, and seldom do you find any among them who adduce their proofs in order to believe.'³ The pages of his *Commentary on the Qur'ān* abound with criticisms of the principle of belief on authority, and all who advocate it. Any utterance of the Qur'ān which offers any support for the free use of reason or any opportunity to denounce those who oppose it, is employed to the full. Of many examples of this, the following, on chapter ii, verse 166, may be taken as typical. The verse reads: 'The infidels resemble him who shouteth aloud to one who heareth no more than a call and a cry! Deaf, dumb, blind; therefore they have no understanding.' On this verse he observes:

'This verse clearly announces that belief on authority, without reason and guidance, is a characteristic of the godless. For one becomes a believer only when he grasps his religion with reason, and comprehends it with his soul, so that he becomes fully convinced of it. But he who is trained to simply admit, without the

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 731, 732.

² *Risālah*, p. 177; Michel, translation, p. 108; quoted by Horten, *Beiträge*, xiv. 108.

³ *Risālah*, p. 72; Michel, translation, p. 46.

use of reason, and to practice without thinking—even though it be something good—he is not to be called a believer. For the design of faith is not this, that a man should be drilled for the good, as though he were trained for it like an animal; rather, that the reason and soul of the man should be elevated by knowledge and comprehension . . . and that he should practice the good, not only for the reason that he is thoughtlessly imitating his fathers and ancestors. For this reason, the *Qur'ān* here calls the unbelievers “deaf, dumb, blind, who have no understanding”.¹

The principle upon which the advocates of *taḳlīd* based their claims, was that of reverence for the early generations of Muslims, who alone, they asserted, were capable of interpreting Islām. For this reason, the right of *ijtihād*, or independent investigation for the purpose of forming one's own opinion on any matter of religion, was denied to later generations. Muḥammad 'Abduh, on the contrary, claimed equal participation of all generations in the ‘grace-gifts’ of God, and the right of *ijtihād* for the present generation, as for all others. Thus he says:

‘Islām turned aside the hearts of men from exclusive attachment to customs and practices of the fathers, which had been handed down from father to son. It attributed folly and levity to those who accept blindly the words of their predecessors. And it called attention to the fact, that precedence in point of time is not one of the signs of knowledge, nor a mark of superiority of intellect or intelligence; but that the preceding generations and the later are on an equality so far as critical acumen and natural abilities are concerned. Indeed, the later generations have a knowledge of past circumstances, and a capacity to reflect upon them, and to profit by the effects of them in the world, which have survived until their times, that the fathers and forefathers who preceded them did not have.’²

It is particularly in the treatment of the canon law of Islām, that Muḥammad 'Abduh and his followers demand the right of independent investigation. Some further account of what they advocate in this direction will be given later.³ But

¹ *Al-Manār*, vii. 442. Quoted by Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 364, together with other examples.

² *Risālah*, pp. 176, 177; Michel, translation, p. 108. Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, pp. 365, 366, gives examples from the *Commentary on the Qur'ān*.

³ Cf. below, Chapter VIII.

his belief in the necessity of the use of reason, and the right of each man to do so in his own way, appears frequently in all parts of his writings. He urged tolerance among the adherents of the different sects of Muslims, and between Muslims and the adherents of other religions.¹ In many matters of interpretation and belief he allowed individual freedom. Thus, at the conclusion of his *Risālah*, he writes:

'If any man believes in the Revered Book and its practical laws, but finds difficulty in understanding in its literal sense what it says concerning the Unseen World; and if he, by the use of his reason, adopts as his interpretation truths for which he adduces proofs, while at the same time retaining his belief in a life after death and in rewards and punishments for actions and beliefs; it being understood, that his interpretation does not detract anything from the value of the threats and promises, and does not destroy any part of the structure of the Divine Law as concerns its imposing of responsibility—that man is a true believer, even though it is not proper that his example in so interpreting should be followed. For in the Divine Laws, regard has been had to what the ability of the commonalty can attain to, not what the intellects of the few aspire to. And the principle in this is, that faith is assurance in one's belief regarding God, and His apostles, and the Last Day, with no restriction therein except the maintenance of reverence for what has been revealed by the prophets.'²

A final example may be taken from the close of his address to a gathering of the 'Ulamā of Tunis: 'I have made these remarks of mine, but have not intended that those who hear them are required to accept them. Otherwise, I should be acting contrary to the independence of thought and freedom of opinion which I am advocating. However, I do not suppose that any one of my hearers would accept them, because required to, even though I sought to require it of them. But these remarks are an opinion which I offer to my hearers. If they find it correct, they may accept it; if not, they have nought to fear but the bearing of the hardship of the free man in this assembly. And that is a lot in which both they and I share.'³

¹ Cf. further below, Chapter VIII.

² *Risālah*, p. 224; Michel, translation, pp. 137, 138.

³ *Tafsīr sūrat al-'aṣr wa khiṭāb 'āmm*, 2nd ed., Cairo, 1330/1912, p. 92.

Religion and Science.

It was natural, his attitude towards reason being what it was, that he should desire to promote the development of all the sciences among the Muslims. For he considered that if reason were exercised in study of the phenomena of nature, there would result, on the one hand, a knowledge of God which would be of religious and spiritual benefit; and on the other, a discovery of the secrets of nature which would result in many practical benefits. Thus he says: 'Reflection upon the created world directs, of necessity, to worldly benefits, and lights up a path for the soul to the knowledge of the One of whom these benefits are the evidences and Whose light is clearly manifest in them.'¹ A basic text of the *Qur'ān* in this connexion was *Sūrah ii. 27*: 'He created for you all that is on Earth.' Reference to this verse recurs frequently in his writings; a number of these references have occurred in quotations already given.² There is a reminiscence of it in the way in which he states the mission of the prophet Muḥammad. Part of his mission was, he says, to summon men 'to know that God had committed to them all that was before their eyes in the universe, and had given them power to understand it and to profit by it without condition or limitation, except the practice of moderation and the observance of the limitations set up by the just Divine Law'.³ Again he says: 'The *Qur'ān* also makes such mention of the origin of the universe—of creation, &c.—as to further arouse the intellect to follow its natural course in discovering the original state of things and the laws which govern them. . . . The *Qur'ān* does not restrict the mind in these things in any respect, but in many verses summons to a consideration of the signs of God in nature. . . . These verses would total as much as half of the *Qur'ān*.'⁴

There is thus, essentially, no conflict between religion and science. Both are based upon reason, and both to a certain extent study the same phenomena, but each with its own object in view.⁵ Since the *Qur'ān* has encouraged the study

¹ *Risālah*, p. 55; Michel, translation, p. 35.

² Cf. above, pp. 123, 128.

³ *Risālah*, p. 156; Michel, translation, p. 97.

⁴ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, pp. 49, 50.

⁵ Cf. Michel, *Introd.*, p. xlix.

of the physical universe, without imposing any limits to such study, religion cannot be held to be other than friendly to science. Religion, he says, regarded as a check upon human reason in order to lessen its errors, 'is, in this sense, to be considered a friend of science, encouraging the study of the secrets of the universe, summoning to regard for established truths, and requiring dependence upon them in the formation of character and the improvement of actions'.¹ In another place he writes: 'The world will not come to an end, until the promise of God to make His light complete will have been fulfilled, and religion will take science by the hand, and they will aid one another in rectifying both the intellect and the heart.'²

Such was his respect for science, that he urges upon his fellow Muslims, in all his writings, the duty of the acquirement of the sciences in which Western nations excel, in order to be able to compete with these nations. In one of his early articles in *Al-Ahrām*, he wrote: 'We see no reason for their progress to wealth and power except the advancement of education and the sciences among them. Our first duty, then, is to endeavour with all our might and main to spread these sciences in our country.'³ On the other hand, it is only as the hearts of the people are purified, and their souls uplifted, and their characters ennobled, by a return to the true Islām that they can hope for success in this competition with other nations. This is a frequent note in the writings of Muḥammad 'Abduh, and also of his followers, particularly in *Al-Manār*. The following is a characteristic statement: 'The Muslims, if their characters are disciplined by their religion, can compete with Europeans in the acquirement of the sciences and education, and equal them in civilization.'⁴

The frequent references in the *Qur'ān* to the phenomena of nature afford him many opportunities, in his comment on these passages, to press home the duty of the study of the natural sciences. Thus, in connexion with *Sūrah* ii. 159, after paying his respects to those who, 'in the name of religion, set

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 892.

² *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, p. 134, quoted by Michel, p. xlix.

³ Cf. above, p. 39.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, ii. 480.

themselves against the pursuit of an education in natural science', and showing how the study of nature rather than dialectic speculation, leads to the knowledge of God, he concludes: 'God has sent down two books: one created, which is nature, and one revealed, which is the *Ḳur'ān*. The latter leads us to investigate the former by means of the intelligence which was given to us. He who obeys, will become blessed; he who turns away, goes towards destruction.'¹ In connexion with the study of the natural sciences, perfection in the technical sciences is also urged in order that Muslim nations may be prepared for the eventuality of war in defence of their rights. Thus, in connexion with *Sūrah* iii. 200, he quotes *Sūrah* viii. 60-2, which read: 'Or if thou fear treachery from any people, render them the like. . . . Make ready then against them what force ye can, and strong squadrons whereby ye may strike terror into the enemy of God and your enemy.' From these verses he deduces the principle that 'the unbelievers must be fought with the same means which they employ for fighting against Islām. It is included in this, that one must rival them in our time in the manufacture of cannon and rifles, of warships and airships, and other kinds of implements of war. This all makes perfection in the technical and natural sciences to be an inescapable duty of the Muslims, for only by this means can military preparedness be attained.'²

Muḥammad 'Abduh's own grounding in the modern sciences was not profound, as might naturally be expected of one whose scholastic training was that of an Azhar shaikh, and whose acquaintance with modern science was acquired outside of the school-room and largely by his own efforts, after he had been inducted into the study of it by Jamāl al-Dīn.³ Yet he shows considerable familiarity with modern developments in a number of fields, especially those which concerned his interpretation of the *Ḳur'ān* and his efforts in defence of Islām. At the same time, he is in some respects surprisingly backward, as Horten has pointed out; as in maintaining, for example, that the mountains solidify the earth and form its

¹ *Al-Manār*, vii. 292. Cf. full quotation in Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, pp. 352, 353.

² *Al-Manār*, xii. 408, 409. Quoted by Goldziher, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

³ Cf. above, p. 34.

basis, and prevent the interior fluxing material from escaping ; that the sea covers hell, as scientific investigation shows and volcanic eruption confirms, &c.¹ In illustration of his information in matters of science, and, at the same time, of the way in which he used this information in his interpretation of the *Qur'ān*, the following examples are given.

On *Sūrah* ii. 18, 19: 'A storm cloud out of heaven, big with darkness, thunder and lightning,' &c., he writes:

'The truth about lightning and thunder and the storm cloud and the reasons for their occurrence, is not among the subjects investigated by the *Qur'ān*, because this belongs to the science of nature and the happenings of the atmosphere, which it is possible for men to know by their own exertions and does not depend upon inspiration. The external phenomena only of things are mentioned in the *Qur'ān*, to incite consideration and supply proofs and direct the reason to the study by which the understanding and reason will be strengthened. The knowledge of the universe waxes and wanes among peoples, and differs with differences of time ; for example, people once believed that lightning was caused by material bodies, &c. . . . In the present day it appears that there is in the universe a fluid substance called electricity, some of the effects of which are seen in the telegraph, telephone, tram-cars, electric lights in houses and streets,' &c. Then follows a description of the way in which electric lights are caused by the meeting of positive and negative currents, an explanation of the occurrence of lightning and thunder, and the use of the lightning rod, &c.²

Again, questions affecting modern medicine are raised in the interpretation of *Sūrah* ii. 276: 'They who swallow down usury shall arise (in the Resurrection) only as he ariseth whom Satan hath infected by his touch.'

'The common interpretation', he says, 'refers this to the Resurrection, at which time, says Tradition, those given to usury will arise as epileptics. But the connexion says nothing to indicate a reference to the Resurrection ; whereas this interpretation depends upon Tradition, and is like most other traditional interpretations in being invented to explain a difficult passage which the

¹ *Beiträge*, xiv. 105. Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 355, remarks: 'He is indeed saturated through and through with the ideas which he acquired during his sojourn in Europe, and also later from literature.'

² *Al-Manār*, iv. 334 sqq. Cf. Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 356.

interpreters did not understand. But the suggestion of Ibn 'Aṭīyah is nearer the truth: they shall arise, that is, in their ordinary movements, as the one whom Satan hath infected, &c., that is, like an epileptic. The nervous irregular movements of the usurer indicate his intense absorption in gain by resorting to other than natural means of increase. The disordered and irregular character of his motions suggests the comparison with the epileptic.' Then is given a possible reconciliation of this view with the traditional view regarding the Resurrection.

'The comparison in this verse', he continues, 'is based on the idea prevalent among the Arabs, that an epileptic had been touched by Satan, an idea that had become proverbial with them. The verse does not confirm, nor does it deny, the truth of the idea expressed in the comparison, that is, that the epileptic has actually been touched by Satan and that his condition is due to that. The 'Ulamā differ. The Mu'tazilites held that Satan has no other influence over man than suggestion, others held that epilepsy is his work. Physicians to-day consider it a nervous disease which can be treated as similar diseases, by drugs and other modern methods and, some say, by suggestion. This is not an indisputable proof that the unseen creatures called "Jinn" cannot possibly have any sort of connexion with persons disposed to epilepsy, so that under certain conditions they might be the cause of it. The 'Ulamā say that the Jinn are living bodies which cannot be seen. The "Manār" has said more than once that it is permissible to say that the minute living bodies which to-day have been made known by the microscope and are called microbes, may possibly be a species of the Jinn. It has been proven that the microbes are the cause of most diseases. . . . However, we Muslims are fortunately under no necessity of disputing with science or the findings of medicine regarding the correction of a few traditional interpretations. The Qur'ān itself is too elevated in character to be in opposition to science.'¹

Nor have certain particular questions that have been raised by modern science, such as questions concerning the origins of the universe and of natural life, been neglected. 'Abduh endeavours to deal with the origin of the human race as stated in the Qur'ān, for example, in a way that is capable of harmonization with Darwinian views. The definite statement of Sūrah iv. 1, requires careful handling: 'O men! fear

¹ *Al-Manār*, ix. 334, 335. Cf. Goldziher, op. cit., pp. 356 sqq.

your Lord who hath created you of one man (*nafs*, soul) and of him created his wife and from these twain hath spread abroad so many men and women.' He begins with a discussion of the address, 'O men!' It is generally held that *Sūrah*s beginning with this form of address belong to the Meccan period. But Shaikh 'Abduh holds that the address is general, no one group or people being particularized. By one 'soul' is not intended expressly by the text nor by the literal meaning a reference to Adam. It is thus possible for each people or group to interpret it of their own origin according to their own beliefs. Those who think that all are descended from Adam can refer it to him ; and those who think that each race has its own progenitor, can refer it to him.

Among the indications of the context that Adam is not intended, is the general and indefinite way in which the descendants are referred to: 'many men and women'. It would have been more fitting if Adam had been intended to say, 'all men and women'. Further, since the address is general to all peoples, many of whom know nothing about Adam and Eve, how could such a particular reference be intended ? The origin of the human race from Adam is a history derived from the Hebrews, whereas the Chinese, for example, have a different tradition. Science and investigation into the history of mankind have discredited the Hebrew tradition. And we Muslims are not obliged to believe the account of the Jews, even though it be traced back to Moses : for we have no confidence that it is from the *Tawrah* (Books of Moses) and that it has remained as Moses gave it. . . . 'God has left here the matter of the soul from which he created men indefinite, so let us leave it in its indefiniteness. Then if what European investigators are saying, that each race has its own progenitor, be proven, that will not be derogatory to the *Qur'ān* as it would be to the *Tawrah* because of its greater definiteness.' He concludes: 'I should like to know what those who believe that the question is decided by the wording of the *Qur'ān* would say concerning one who is convinced on scientific grounds that mankind is from several origins ? Would they say, if he wished to become a Muslim but did not wish to give up his scientific conviction, that his faith is not valid and his *Islām* is not to be accepted, even though he is convinced that the *Qur'ān* is from God, and that there is no text conflicting with his conviction ?'¹

¹ *Al-Manār*, xii. 483 sqq. ; Goldziher, op. cit., pp. 358, 359.

In like manner, room is found in the Ḳur'ān for the principles of 'the struggle for existence' and 'the survival of the fittest'. These are recognized as belonging to the category of the laws of God in nature and in human history. It will be convenient, therefore, to give a word at this point to the question of natural law, which is a matter to which frequent allusion is made in the writings of Muḥammad 'Abduh and his disciples. Those familiar with the orthodox theology of Islām will recognize that there is no place in it for natural law in the scientific sense, because of the absolute predominance assigned to the will of God as the immediate active cause of all existence and all that happens and the maintenance of all things in existence by continued creation.¹ But 'Abduh, while not abating essentially the pre-eminence of the will of God as the immediate cause of things, yet finds in the phrase which occurs a number of times in the Ḳur'ān, namely, 'the Usage, or Custom, (*Sunnah*) of God', an expression of the idea of natural law.² The basal text in this connexion and the one most frequently quoted is Sūrah xxxiii. 62: 'Such hath been the Custom (*Sunnah*) of God with those who lived before them; and no change canst thou find in the Custom of God'; or the similar verse, Sūrah xxxv. 43: 'Look they then for aught but God's Custom with reference to the peoples of old? Thou shalt not find any change in the Custom of God,—Yea, thou shalt not find any variableness in the Custom of God.'

The foregoing verses refer particularly to God's dealing with men, but the idea of law is also applied generally to nature. Thus the following statement: 'The universe has laws (*sunnah*, plural *sunan*) in the composition of precious stones and the rocks, in the growing of plants, in the life of animals, in the assembling of bodies and their scattering, in their composition and dissolution. This is what we designate as the secondary origin.' In discussions of nature and of astronomy,

¹ *Vide*, for example, the statement of the Ash'arite positions in MacDonald, *Development of Muslim Theology*, pp. 201 sqq.

² An idea of the significance of the word 'sunnah' may be had, if it is recalled that the 'Usage (*Sunnah*) of the Prophet', that is to say, his general practice as it may be gathered from what he did and said and approved, either explicitly or implicitly, is one of the recognized bases of Muslim canon law.

these laws are treated as matters of scientific fact. But more frequent attention is given to the laws of society. Thus the same statement continues: 'Mankind has special laws (*sunan*) in their social life, by which they are governed. Thus their strength and weakness, wealth and poverty, might and humiliation, domination and subjection, life and death, all these furnish illustrations which should induce men to obey the laws of God. Those who live according to the laws of God continue to be the ones who hold the widest dominion of all the nations.'¹ The *Qur'ān* was the first book to take account of these laws of society. To ignore these laws or to disobey them is futile. No nation that has ever done so has been a dominant nation. Thus on *Sūrah* xiii. 12: 'Verily God does not change the state of a people until they change their own state,' he says: 'Nations have not fallen from their greatness nor have their names been wiped off the slate of existence, except after they have departed from those laws which God prescribed with supreme wisdom. God will not change the state of a people from might and power and wealth and peace, until that people change their own state of intellectual knowledge and correctness of thinking and perception, and consideration for the works of God towards previous nations who went astray from the path of God and therefore perished. Ruin overtook them because they turned aside from the law of justice and the path of insight and wisdom . . . and chose to live in falsehood rather than die in the aid of the truth.'² The reason why Muslims have fallen a prey to other nations is because they have neglected to obey the injunction of the *Qur'ān* to study the laws to which it points the way. It is of no avail for them to plead that they are Muslims, or even pious Muslims; it is not a matter of piety alone. Thus *Sūrah* iii. 117 indicates 'that God will not destroy a nation on account of its idolatry, if otherwise it does justice and observes the rules of progress'.³

In connexion with *Sūrah* ii. 249–53, which contain the story of Saul and David and the war against the Philistines,

¹ *Al-Manār*, ix. 54, 55. The statement is in reality by Muḥammad Rashid Riḍā, but gives in succinct form the ideas of Muḥammad 'Abduh.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 323, 324.

³ *Al-Manār*, ix. 56.

a series of 'general sociological laws of the *Qur'ān*' is given. These have to do with the political affairs of nations and their general progress. One of the laws, drawn from verse 252: 'Were it not for the restraint of one by means of the other, imposed on men by God, verily the earth had been utterly corrupted', is: 'God's restraint of men by setting some against others is a part of his general laws, and it is what is referred to to-day as the "struggle for existence". War is said to be natural among men for it is part of the struggle for existence. But God's restraint of men is not confined to war but includes all forms of struggle which require contest and victory. This is not a discovery made by the materialists of the present day.' Another law is suggested by the clause 'verily the earth had been corrupted'. This confirms the law which scientists have called 'natural selection' or 'survival of the fittest'. This is evident from the fact that the preservation of the earth from corruption is the result of the contest between different peoples, that is, the mutual struggle is the cause of the survival of the truth and of uprightness'.¹ The same principles are deduced from other passages. Many applications of these principles are found; as in the following: 'Differences of views regarding the universe are only the result of the struggle of truth with falsehood. But the truth must be victorious and prevail over falsehood, by means of the co-operation of thoughts or by the conquest of strong thoughts over the weak.'²

It was 'Abduh's firm conviction that the spirit of Islām, as truly conceived, was tolerant of all scientific investigation. In his writings in defence of Islām, he maintains that it has been more tolerant in the past than has Christianity;³ and in his *Risālah* he quotes with approval the words of a European writer, whose name he does not mention, who ascribes the rise of the spirit of investigation in Europe in the sixteenth century to the influence of Islām.⁴ At the same time, he laments the rigidity of Islāmic thought in the present day, and censures the spirit of those who forbid modern learning

¹ *Tafsīr al-Manār*, ii. 483 sqq.; also in *Al-Manār*, viii. 929, 930; cf. Goldziher, op. cit., pp. 355, 356.

² *Risālah*, p. 55; Michel, translation, p. 35. ³ Cf. above, pp. 90 sqq.

⁴ *Risālah*, p. 178; Michel, translation, p. 109.

and modern thought. But he is sanguine in his belief that the present state of affairs will pass. 'The light of this Glorious Book (the *Ḳur'ān*), which has been followed by science whithersoever it has gone, East or West, must once more return to full manifestation; and this Book will rend the veils of error, and it will return again to its original place in the hearts of the Muslims, and will find a resting place there. And science will follow it; since science is its true friend, which associates with it only, and depends upon it alone.'¹

¹ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, p. 132.

CHAPTER VII

MUHAMMAD 'ABDUH: DOCTRINES

Exposition of Doctrines.

Doctrine of God.

IT has been remarked before that the earliest thought of Muḥammad 'Abduh regarding the nature of God was pantheistic in its character.¹ In *Al-wāridāt*, he maintained the doctrine of the unity of all existence. Just as 'the house is one state possible to the parts of which it is composed and one of the ways in which they may be considered; and the tree is one stage in the life of the seed and one of its states; and the waves are one stage of the sea and one of its states', so the universe in all the aspects of its existence is but an expression of the existence of God. 'We say there is no existence except his existence, and no attribute except his attributes. He is the Existent One, and other than He is non-existent.'² Since 'perfection is existence, and imperfection is non-existence', He is perfection itself, being entirely free from non-existence and having fully attained to His own self-realization. 'He is perfection in Himself, since He has no non-existence in any of His aspects; and all perfection is the manifestation of His perfection.'³ Since the varying phenomena of nature are but manifestations of His own being, He knows all things by His knowledge of Himself (i.e. His self-consciousness); for His knowledge and His essence are identical. 'You must therefore say that His knowledge is His very essence, and He by His essence is His very knowledge. . . . So, as His essence is one in itself, and multiplicity takes place only in the world of manifestations, so thus His knowledge of all things is one in itself, and its multiplicity is in the world of manifestations.' But the fact that the outward phenomena are so manifold, should not obscure the essential identity of knowledge and being. 'For the sea, did it have

¹ Cf. above, p. 40.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 13; cf. Horten, *Beiträge*, xiv. 94. On the subject of the doctrine of God, as a whole, cf. Horten, op. cit., pp. 92 sqq.; also, Michel, pp. lv. sqq. .

³ *Tārīkh* ii. 13.

knowledge of itself, would not need another knowledge with which to have knowledge of its waves.'¹

In the same treatise, he maintains, as against Al-Ash'arī, that the knowledge of God extends to the essence of things, since He is their cause, and does not embrace simply their outward manifestations; and, as against the disciples of the philosophers, that He has a knowledge of particulars and not simply of universals. He also denied the doctrine of the mystics, that time is a form of the existence of God, and therefore all things in time are present before Him. Rather, He knows all things by His knowledge of Himself.² Further, he argues against the thesis of those who followed the teaching of the philosophers, that His knowledge concerning particulars was by means of the formation of mental images, or concepts, within Himself. Rather, he maintains, He knows things by His knowledge of His essence, which is His essence itself.³

In his later *Risālah*, however, there is no trace of this earlier pantheistic teaching. He states the argument for the existence of God which is derived from the contingency of things, as it has been taken over by the Muslim theologians from their philosophers, who, in turn, borrowed it from the Greek philosophers. This argument is based on the recognition that all things must have a cause; but this cause must, in turn, have a cause; and thus the mind is led, by a chain of causes, to affirm a final First Cause, which is Self-existent Necessary Being, existing from all eternity, which is the cause of all things.⁴ This line of reasoning is confirmed by a study of the harmony and order which exist in the universe, and the evidence of the linking up of causes and their effects, all furnishing manifestations of wisdom and design. Reason is thus led to believe in a Divine Creator, who is necessarily existent, knowing, wise, omnipotent, and even to assert the unity of the Creator, in correspondence with the unity of the order seen in existing things. 'Is it possible that simple coincidence, which is called Chance, should be the source of

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 17, 18. ² *Ibid.*, pp. 15-17. Cf. Horten, *op. cit.*, pp. 95, 96.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴ *Risālah*, pp. 29 sqq.; Michel, translation, pp. 2

this orderly system, and the originator of those rules upon which the things of the universe, whether important or insignificant, are based ?'¹

Certain of the attributes of the Creator are discoverable by reason. They have also been confirmed by revelation. These are: priority, that is, existence from all eternity; continuance, that is, existence to all eternity; the impossibility of composition in His essence; life, knowledge, will, power, unity. These are all arrived at by reason and proof: for example, knowledge is necessary on *a priori* grounds and is supported by the evidence of order and harmony in the universe.² He argues for the unity of God, on the ground that, were there more than one Necessarily Existent Being, their deeds would be at variance because the knowledge and the will of each would not be identical with the knowledge and will of the others. Thus there would be conflict and confusion in the universe, and its order would be subverted, indeed, all order would be impossible. Still further, the existence of any contingent things would be impossible; for these things would necessarily be brought into existence in accordance with the conflicting knowledge and wills of the supposed Creators, and thus each separate thing would necessarily have a number of existences, which is impossible. Thus the *Qur'ān* says: 'If there were in them (the heavens and the earth) gods other than Allāh, they would have been corrupted,' *Sūrah xxi. 22*. But this corruption does not exist, as is known by intuition.³ Besides these attributes which can be known by reason, there are others which cannot be so known, although they are not contrary to reason. These have been revealed by the *Qur'ān*. They are: speech, and hearing.

We know, and must believe, that God possesses these attributes. But how He possesses them, and whether they are identical with His essence or separate from it, and many other questions which theologians have discussed at great length, cannot be known by human intellects and are not to be investigated. Thus with a brief reference, 'from a dis-

¹ *Risālah*, p. 43; Michel, translation, p. 29. And cf. above, p. 128.

² *Ibid.*, p. 41; Michel, translation, p. 27.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 48; Michel, translation, p. 31.

tance', to use his own phrase, he dismisses some of the major questions which have troubled Muslim theologians,¹ However, the orthodox position regarding these attributes is reaffirmed: although they may be similar in name to attributes and qualities ascribed to human beings, they are in reality not the same in nature. 'God does not resemble any of His creatures, and there is no relation between them and Him, except that He is the one who brought them into existence, and they belong to Him and will return to Him.'² The expressions, 'hands', 'face', 'settling Himself upon the throne', &c., which are used by the *Qur'ān*, are metaphors which were understood without difficulty by the Arabs to whom they were addressed.³ A simple statement of belief, he gives in the following: 'That which faith requires us to believe, is to know that He is existent, and that He does not resemble created things; that He is eternal, without beginning and without end; that He is living, knowing, willing, powerful; that He is unique in being the One whose existence is necessary, unique in the perfection of His attributes, unique in the creation of His creatures; and that He is a speaker, a hearer, a seer, and possesses the related attributes which the Divine Law has mentioned by name.'⁴

God acts always of free choice, which is based upon His knowledge, His will, and His power. None of His acts, nor any part of the course which He pursues with His creatures, proceed from Him as blind causality, or as something required by existence, without consciousness and will on His part. He is not required to have regard for what is best for the universe, in a way that would oblige Him to follow a certain course of action, the omission of which would subject Him to censure. Rather, the order of the universe and what is best for it in the highest degree, are determined for

¹ Cf. above, p. 119.

² *Risālah*, p. 168; Michel, translation, p. 104; also, p. 223, Michel, p. 137. This seems to be the statement which he adopts. But there is an earlier statement which differs somewhat from this. He says: 'The *Qur'ān* describes God by attributes which, though nearer to transcendence than descriptions of former generations, yet partake with human attributes, either in name or in genus (*jins*), such as power, choice, hearing, sight.' 'In this', says Rashīd Riḍā, 'he has chosen the first of two views which are held', p. 9; Michel, p. 7, Cf. Horten, op. cit., p. 79, n. 5.

³ *Risālah*, p. 169; Michel, translation, p. 104. ⁴ Ibid., p. 57; Michel, p. 36.

Him by the fact that the universe is a consequence (*athar*) of Necessary Existence, which is the most perfect existence. The perfection of the universe is only a consequence of the perfection of the Creator.¹ In another place, he affirms that God's acts, such as creation, sustenance, &c., are characterized by contingency, that is, are neither required by reason nor prohibited. None of His acts are incumbent upon Him, not even by any necessity in His own nature.²

On the question whether the Ḳur'ān is identical with God's attribute of speech and therefore eternal and uncreated, a question which has received bitter and acrimonious discussion in Islām, which has led even to persecution, 'Abduh maintained in the first edition of his *Risālah* that the Ḳur'ān was created. But his friend, Muḥammad Maḥmūd Shankīṭī, reminded him that this statement was not in accord with the orthodox belief, which is that the speech of God as an attribute, of which the ideas of the Ḳur'ān are an expression, is eternal, but that the manifestations of it, including the words of the Ḳur'ān which are pronounced and read, are created. Shaikh 'Abduh deferred to this criticism, and in subsequent editions a statement was included which accorded with the accepted position. In the fifth edition, however, all discussion of the question is omitted, and only the following brief statement occurs: 'The Ḳur'ān declared that it is the speech of God. Now the source of the speech which proceeds from God must necessarily be one of His attributes, eternal by reason of His eternity.'³

Doctrine of Man.

Something has already been said of the origin of man.⁴

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 45, 46; Michel, translation, p. 30. Michel (Introd., p. lxii) points out that in thus regarding the principle of causality from the point of view, not of physical but of moral necessity, he is following a thesis of the later Ash'arite theologians, which is intermediary between the views of Ash'arī and those of the Mu'tazilites.

² *Ibid.*, p. 58; Michel, translation, p. 37. The phrase which he uses to describe contingency is 'special possibility' (*al-imkān al-khāṣṣ*), a term used by Avicenna. Cf. Horten, *Beiträge*, xiv. 98.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 50; Michel, translation, p. 33. The note on p. 50, together with *Al-Manār*, i. 465, 466, give an account of the change of text. Cf. Michel, p. lviii; *Beiträge*, xiv. 98.

⁴ Cf. above, pp. 138, 139.

He was created by God, but not necessarily as a single pair from whom all the race of man is descended. Reference may be made to the conception elaborated in his earliest treatise, that the individual souls of men are radiations of the universal souls, which are divided into four classes.¹ But nothing of this appears in his later works.

Man he says in the *Risālah*, has always been greatly intrigued by the question of his own soul. He has tried to discover its nature, and its relation to the body which it inhabits. But with all that he has been able to learn concerning it, its real nature still eludes him.² But he has an inherent consciousness which he shares with all mankind, of all religions and even of no religion, with few exceptions, that the soul of man does not suffer extinction after death; that it is immortal, although there is no general agreement regarding the nature of the existence which is vouchsafed to it after death. Nevertheless, this consciousness is so widespread, among all classes and conditions of men, that it cannot be explained as an aberration of the intellect nor a delusion of the imagination. It is one of the instincts which are peculiar to human kind. There are those, of course, who deny this feeling, just as there are those who deny the sufficiency of reason and thought as guides to action and belief, who deny the existence of the world except in the imagination, who doubt everything, even the fact that they doubt. But this does not impair the correctness of the general instinct that reason and thought are the corner-stones of life and existence up to the end of the appointed period of life. In like manner, men's minds are conscious of the instinct, and their souls have the feeling, that this brief life is not the end of man's existence, but that he will lay aside his body just as he lays aside his clothes, and will continue to exist in another stage, even though he does not comprehend its exact nature. This is an intuition which wellnigh rivals an axiomatic truth in clearness. It causes every soul to be conscious that it was created with the capacity to receive limitless knowledge in innumerable ways, that it aspires to enjoyments without limit and without end, and that it is prepared for degrees of perfection that also are without limit. On the other hand, it is exposed to the sufferings of passion, and struggles against wandering desires, and illnesses which afflict the body, and wrestlings against many other kinds of requirements

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 20 sqq. Horten, op. cit., pp. 99, 100, gives a brief account.

² Cf. above, p. 118.

and needs. The soul which is conscious of all these things, is led by its intuition to apprehend that the Creator has but apportioned its capacities to its needs in existence, that His treatment has not been purposeless nor inconsequential. Inasmuch, therefore, as it has the capacity to receive an infinite amount of knowledge and pain and enjoyment and perfection, it is not fitting that its existence should be limited to a brief period of days or years.¹

God endowed man with physical senses, by which to apprehend what is necessary for his self-preservation and self-advantage; and with reason, which is the guiding and controlling power, by which he distinguishes the right from the wrong, and what is harmful from what is beneficial.² He has endowed him also with an emotional nature, by which to apprehend the feelings and desires which take place in his soul. Man needs both reason and emotion. The two react on one another; true knowledge rectifies the emotions, and the latter, when sound, are one of the strongest aids to knowledge. At times there may seem to be conflict between intellect and emotion; as when one apprehends by his intellect the danger of a certain act, yet does it in obedience to his emotional nature. Yet, in reality, there is no conflict between them. What was held to be a conviction of the intellect, was only a form derived from others and was not based on real knowledge; or what was held to be an instinctive feeling, was due to imagination or inherited custom.³

The needs of men, as well as their capacities, differ in races and in individuals, in endless degrees of variation, according to race, climate, and condition. But all men possess, in some degree, the powers of memory, imagination, and reflection.⁴ Man was created to choose what is best and most advantageous. But since he was created gregarious by nature and capable of individual and corporate perfection by gradual practice and co-operation; and since practice is only possible by knowledge, and knowledge only by acquisition, man was in danger of being ignorant of the varying aspects of good and evil, advantage and harm, whether in the case

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 98 sqq.; Michel, translation, pp. 61 sqq.

² *Al-Manār*, ix. 159, comment on Sūrah xcv. 4.

³ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, p. 136.

⁴ *Risālah*, p. 82; Michel, translation, p. 52.

of individuals or peoples. And ignorance degrades men. Thus both individuals and groups did harm to themselves when they thought they were doing good. By nature they were seeking the truth in which consisted their advantage, but their reason erred in defining useful truths and distinguishing them from harmful ones. Thus falsehood is not a characteristic of man by nature, but it is one of the accidents which adhere to him by reason of his being a person of will and choice in his actions and his knowledge. But he needs revealed religion to come to the aid of nature and reason.¹

Man was created surrounded by passions, encompassed by desires, shackled by purposes—a captive in their power. He thinks only that is good which they approve, and beautiful which they admire. This is a matter which is wellnigh natural and instinctive. Man cannot overcome them, nor free himself from them. If, infrequently, their power can be lessened—although this is not within the power of every one—yet no one can do so, except he whose concerns have been widened and his impulses purified, so that he can ward off these attractive and compelling powers by means of various instrumentalities, chosen according to the end in view.²

Man thus appears as a creature of contradictions. 'Man is a strange being. He ascends by the power of his reason to the highest planes of the World of the Unseen (*al-malakūt*). He reaches up by his thought to the most elevated truths concerning the World of Divine Omnipotence (*al-jabarūt*). He matches his powers against the forces of the widest universe, which are too great to be contended with. But he also belittles himself, and cowers and abases himself to the lowest degree of humiliation and submission, whenever any matter presents itself to him, the cause of which he does not know, or the origin of which he does not comprehend.'³

With respect to their essential nature, their inherent rights, and their relation to God, all men are on a plane of absolute equality. This was the teaching of the Prophet.⁴ This statement includes women also, who are, in all these respects, on

¹ *Al-Manār*, ix. 59. Cf. further, on the need for prophecy, below, p. 155.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 210, 211. ³ *Risālah*, p. 116; Michel, translation, p. 72.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 155; Michel, translation, p. 96.

an equality with men. This is taught in the *Ḳur'ān*, as, for example, in *Sūrah* iii. 193: 'I will not suffer the work of any among you that worketh, whether male or female, to be lost.'

The passage shows, says Muhammad 'Abduh in his comment, that the decisive point in escape from punishment and success in excellence of reward, consists only in performing the works in proper manner and in sincerity. It shows also that men and women are equal before God in the matter of reward, when they are equal in their works. The reason for this equality is, according to this passage, that 'the one is the issue of the other'. There is, therefore, no difference between them in regard to humanity, and no superiority of one over the other in works. 'Any one who knows how all nations before Islām gave preference to the man, and made the woman a mere chattel and plaything of the man, and how some religions give precedence to the man simply because he is a man and she a woman, and how some people consider the woman as incapable of religious responsibility and as possessing no immortal soul—any one who knows all this, can appreciate at its true value this Islāmic reform in the belief of the nations and their treatment of woman. Moreover, it will be clear to him that the claim of Europeans to have been the first to honour woman and grant her equality, is false. For Islām was before them in this matter; and even yet their laws and religious traditions continue to place the man above the woman. . . . To be sure, the Muslims have been at fault in the education and training of women, and acquainting them with their rights; and we acknowledge that we have failed to follow the guidance of our religion, so that we have become an argument against it.'¹

The question of Man's freedom of action as related to the power and decree of God received more than a proportionate share of attention in 'Abduh's writings. Two reasons seem to account for this fact, both of which appear in an article on predestination in the journal *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*. The first reason is that Europeans, so he states, commonly attribute the present decadence of Muslim lands to the over-emphasis of Muslims upon the power of God and their supine submission to the Divine Will. But he roundly denies that any Muslim of the present day, of whatever sect, holds the

¹ *Al-Manār*, xii. 331. Cf. Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 363. Cf. further below, on polygamy and divorce, &c., Chapter IX, under 'Social Reform'.

view of complete compulsion, or believes that free choice has been taken away from him entirely. 'Rather all of these Muslim sects believe that they have a share of free choice in their actions which they call "acquisition" (*kasb*), and this is the basis of reward and punishment in the opinion of all of them.'¹ The second reason appears in the admission which he makes in spite of the foregoing denial. 'We do not deny that in the thought of the common people in Muslim lands this article has been contaminated with traces of the belief in compulsion, and this perhaps has been the cause of some of the misfortunes that have befallen them in past generations.' Elsewhere, he expresses the opinion that the question of free will has been one of the questions that were of the gravest danger to Islām, but fortunately, the passing of time has brought a more moderate view.² He is concerned, therefore, to promote this more moderate view.

In his *Risālah*, while retaining the customary theological phraseology, that man "acquires" his faith and the other works for which God holds him responsible,³ he emphasizes with great clearness and force man's consciousness of his own freedom of action and his consequent responsibility for what he does. 'He is conscious of his voluntary actions, he weighs the consequences of them by his reason, and assigns value to them by his will, then performs them by a certain power within himself. All this the man of sound reason and senses knows without proof and without a teacher to instruct him.' At the same time, he learns by experience that there is in the universe a Power greater than his own. Yet even this recognition should not cause him to ignore his ability to control his own actions and direct the exercise of his natural powers. For 'the Divine Law is based upon this truth, and by means of it only can responsibilities be rightly imposed. He who denies any part of this, has denied the locus of faith in his own soul, which is his reason, which God has honoured by addressing to it His commands and prohibitions.'⁴

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 263 sqq., on 'Al-ḥaḍā wa al-ḥadar'. Cf. also above, p. 87.

² *Al-Manār*, vi. 589, on 'Sūrat al-'Aṣr' (ciii, 3).

³ *Risālah*, p. 69; Michel, translation, p. 44.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 65-7; Michel, pp. 42, 43. Cf. Horten's discussion, *Beiträge*, xiv. 102, 103.

A brief but comprehensive statement of his teaching on the subject, appears in his comment on Sūrat al-'Aṣr. He says:

'Consciousness and the senses testify that certain acts of a man are his own (as, for example, the killing of another). The Qur'ān also speaks of "what ye do", and of "what your hands have acquired". However, another verse says: "God hath created you and what ye do". This is commonly interpreted in the sense that God occasions all a man's acts. But even this verse speaks of "what ye do". . . . All the requirements of the Divine Law are based on the principle that a man is responsible for what he does. There would be no justice in holding a man responsible for something not within his power nor his will. . . . Thus the Divine Law and the senses and consciousness agree that a man's acts are his own. At the same time, there is no question that all things originate with God and are attributable to Him. This is practically an instinctive recognition. . . . His power also is unquestionable. If He wished, He could rob us of the ability and will which He has given us. The following is a common experience: we make some plan, then things that were not in our plan intervene to prevent; or we begin a work and are not able to finish it. All this is within the knowledge of God: this no one denies.'

The practical conclusion is: 'It is therefore the duty of every Muslim to believe that God is the Creator of everything, in the manner He knows; and to acknowledge that his own deeds are to be attributed to himself, as his own instinct tells him; and to act according to what God has commanded, and avoid what He has prohibited, by exercising that power of choice which he finds within himself. And beyond that, he is not required to lift up his vision to what lies beyond all this.'¹

At the same time, he held that the belief in God's predestination of events, if rightly understood, exerted a moral influence of great value. 'Belief in predestination (*ḡadā wa ḡadar*), if stripped of the idea of compulsion, gives rise to characteristics of boldness, daring, courage, steadfastness, endurance of hardships and difficulties, generosity, and self-sacrifice on behalf of the truth. If one believes that the limit of one's life is appointed, and his daily sustenance provided, and all things are in the hands of God to direct as He will, how can he fear death in defence of the truth and in the ser-

¹ *Al-Manār*, vi. 589, 590. For his attitude towards 'what lies beyond', cf. above, pp. 116, 120.

vice of his country and his religion, or fear poverty in devoting his substance in accordance with the commands of God and the principles of sociology.'¹ It was because of the practical influence of this belief that he wished to rescue it from popular misapprehension of it. In the same article, he writes: 'It is our hope that the 'Ulamā of the present age will do their best to rescue this honourable belief from the taint of harmful innovation, and remind the commonalty of the teaching of such great men of the past as Al-Ghazzālī and others, that the Divine Law requires of us activity, not inactivity and sloth under the guise of dependence on God.'²

Doctrine of Prophecy.

The central place which the doctrine of prophecy occupies in the teaching of Muḥammad 'Abduh, is indicated by the space which he devotes to the discussion of it in his *Risālah*. Eight sections, or chapters, fully a third of the whole work, are occupied with his treatment of the doctrine and its related topics.³ His other writings also give it a prominent place, especially his *Commentary on the Qur'ān*, which naturally affords many occasions for emphasis upon the importance of the doctrine. To him it is the heart of revealed religion, the Divine basis which is common to the three great revealed religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islām, and the sphere in which Islām excels all other religions. The doctrine has always been regarded as important in Islām; but Shaikh 'Abduh seeks to give it new value. He emphasizes, as is his wont, its moral values, and tries to state it in terms that will reveal these values in modern life.

His argument for the necessity of prophecy follows two separate lines, which may be distinguished as, respectively, the psychological and the sociological.⁴ The psychological argument is based on the fact that man, as a thinking and reasoning and feeling being, is conscious of needs and capacities which seem to reach out beyond the present brief physical existence and destine him for some kind of existence

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 267, article on 'Al-ḥaḍā wa al-ḥadar'.

² *Ibid.*, p. 270.

³ *Risālah*, pp. 91-168; Michel, translation, pp. 57-103.

⁴ Michel, p. lxxiii.

after death.¹ So much he is conscious of by nature. But when he comes to inquire concerning the nature of that after life, who, or what manner of force, will control his destiny therein, and how he should conduct himself in this life with reference to that future life, he finds himself helpless and perplexed. He needs some one wiser than himself, to allay his fears and direct him to the means of securing his happiness now and hereafter.² If it be asked, Why was not this knowledge made instinctive within him, so that he would know naturally how to conduct himself in order to attain the greatest happiness? the reply is, that man is a thinking personality, with capacities which vary in regard to such matters in different individuals, and the basis of his existence is investigation and the search for proof. Were such knowledge made instinctive, he would be but following his instincts, like any other animal; or would be an angel and not a dweller on this earth.

The sociological argument is stated in slightly varying forms in different places. The following is from his comment on Sūrah ii, 209: 'Mankind was but one people', &c.³

By 'one people' is meant, not one religion as commonly interpreted, but one people, in the sense of being bound together by social and economic ties, so that it is not possible for the individuals to live apart from one another, and without receiving help from one another. Living thus together, and each one striving for his own advantage and for the necessities of life, it was inevitable that differences in the natures of men and in the powers of intellect should lead to differences among men, because of their mutual rivalries. It was then that God, in His compassion, sent the prophets to teach men to respect one another's rights, and to teach them what these rights are, thus enabling each to attain happiness in this life, and through his obedience, happiness in the life to come. They also warned of failure and loss, both in this life and the future life, if their teaching was disregarded. Thus, the natural instincts of men alone are not sufficient to direct their efforts to what is best for them. They need another kind of guidance to combine with the guidance of thought and reflection,

¹ Cf. above, p. 149.

² *Risālah*, pp. 97 sqq.; Michel, translation, pp. 60 sqq.

³ *Tafsīr*, ii. 283 sqq.; *Al-Manār*, viii. 41-67.

namely, the instruction given by the prophets. In the *Risālah*, emphasis is placed upon love and justice as the bonds which hold human society together. But all men are not actuated by these sentiments, just as all are not actuated by reason. No state of society, therefore, can resist the disintegrating influences of selfishness and injustice. Only the teaching and supernatural personal influence of the prophets can rescue society and restore it to a salutary state.¹

Society, in its development, passes through three stages which are analagous to the stages of infancy, youth, and manhood through which the individual passes. In its infancy, society is under the discipline of the necessities of natural existence; it is only concerned with physical needs, and the question of its own preservation and organization. It has neither time nor leisure for higher concerns. This is the period of the development of implements, from stone to brass to iron, the growth of industry, the progress of the arts. This shows that the law (*sunnah*) of God with respect to nations is identical with that in respect to individuals, that is, gradual progress from weakness to strength, from imperfection to perfection. In this stage, man was subject to the influence of his senses, and the fears and the imaginings which they aroused. But men gradually learned, by their experiences, some of the principles governing their corporate life, and rose from childhood to the early years of discernment and the ability to receive prophecy.

Thus, the stage of youth is the stage of prophecy. When the intellect has attained a certain amount of strength and authority, and the soul has attained the power of dealing with things that are of harm or advantage in a way that may subject him to deceptive influences, and when the desires and passions of the mind are enlarged, then there arises danger to society, from some of its members or all of them, just as in the case of the youth, whose passions may lead him to destruction. As God gave the power of intellect and reason to the youth at a time when his passions might lead him astray, to be a guide to him, so He gave to society the guidance of prophecy at the stage when its expanding knowledge and consciousness of powers and desires, became a source of danger to it. Revelation was accommodated to the moral and intellectual capacity of each nation to which the prophets were sent. The nations were not all equally prepared to receive prophecy; some were more ready than others, and these were fitted

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 105 sqq.; Michel, translation, pp. 65 sqq.

to assume leadership among the nations, according to the Sunnah of God.

Thus the age of prophecy is one of light, of guidance, of goodness and happiness and uprightness and brotherhood, to all who accept it. This state continues so long as the people continue to direct all departments of public and private life according to what has been revealed. But a third stage appears. The farther the nation gets from the time of the prophet, the more hearts become hardened and minds darkened, lusts become powerful and learning decreases, religion is corrupted by its teachers, and differences appear on account of political influences and political leadership. This stage continues until the people bring about a reform and return to obedience to revelation.¹

The sending of the prophets was, therefore, one of the means which God used for the completion of man's existence. The relation which prophecy sustains to the race as a whole, is like that which reason bears to the individual.² It is the purpose of the prophets to reveal the attributes by which God is to be known, not to reveal His existence, which may be apprehended by reason.³ It is not their mission to act as teachers of the sciences or masters of the applied arts. All these belong to the means of material well-being and advancement to which God guides by means of the faculties with which He has endowed men; although, in general, the prophets encourage men to make full use of these things for their own advancement. Any reference, therefore, which the prophets may make to any of these things, such as astronomy, or the form of the earth, and the like, is only to direct attention to these things as proofs of the wisdom of the Creator, and lead men to ponder the mysteries of the universe and admire its wonders.⁴

The nature of prophecy, or inspiration, has been defined, he says, in canon law, as God's act of making known to one of His prophets a statute of the Divine Law, or the like. 'As for us', he continues, 'we define it, according to our method, as the knowledge, gained by religious insight (*'irfān*), which a person finds within himself, with the certainty that it is from God, whether by means of some medium or without. . . . This

¹ *Tafsīr*, ii. 296-300.

² *Risālah*, p. 118; Michel, translation, p. 73.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 156; Michel, p. 97.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 135; Michel, p. 84.

knowledge is distinguished from intuition (*ilhām*) by the fact that the latter is a sensation (*wijdān*) of which the soul is made certain, and to the demands of which it yields, without being conscious on its part of whence it came; and it is more like the sensations of hunger, thirst, sorrow and joy.¹ But this knowledge is possible only for those chosen by God to become his prophets, whose nature He elevates, and whose minds and utterances He protects against error and falsehood. Their conduct, likewise, is rendered free from human error, and their bodies free from physical defect.²

As for the possibility of error on the part of the prophets, in matters which do not pertain to their message or the transmission of the Divine Law, some of the Muslims have admitted the possibility, but the majority do not allow it. The incident of the Prophet's forbidding fertilization of the date-palm, was to teach men that the means which they employ for material gain and in the processes of the arts are committed to their own knowledge and experience, and there is no restriction placed upon following these, so long as the Law is observed and the virtues conserved. As for the disobedience of Adam by eating from the forbidden tree, the reason for the prohibition and his punishment after eating is a secret which is hidden from us. The utmost that we can learn of it is that it became the occasion for the peopling of the earth by the sons of Adam; as though the prohibition and the eating were two allegories of two successive stages in the life of Adam, or two different states in the existence of the human race. But God knows best. In any case, it is difficult to find proof, either in reason or in the Divine Law, which will decisively establish the view held by the majority.³

The prophets, in the fulfilment of the mission, are supported by Divine Providence in a miraculous way, which is a proof of the truthfulness of their mission. The evidentiary miracle (*mu'jizah*) of the prophet is not a logical impossibility. For contravention of the course of nature as we know it, is something the impossibility of which has not been proven. The One who made the law of nature is the One who formed all

¹ *Risālah*, p. 118; Michel, translation, p. 74.

² *Ibid.*, p. 92; Michel, p. 58.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 95, 96; Michel, p. 60.

existing things; therefore, it is not impossible for Him to make laws which apply especially to extraordinary occurrences. We do not know them, but we see the effects of them at the hands of those to whom God has especially shown His favour. Our belief in the power and will of the Creator enables us to believe that it is not impossible for Him to bring about an event in any form, and as a consequence to any cause, which His omniscience may determine.¹ But the best attestation of their mission consists in the fact that 'maladies of the heart are healed by the remedies which they bring, and weakness of resolution and reason is turned into power in the case of the peoples who accept their message. For it is axiomatic, that what is correct cannot emanate from a defective source, and perfect order cannot be restored by a disordered cause.'²

Muhammad is the last of the prophets, and the greatest, 'the Seal of the prophets'. With him, revelation has come to an end. 'The prophecies have been sealed with his prophecy, and the prophetic mission has ceased with his mission, as the *Qur'ān* has affirmed, and correct tradition has confirmed, and the failure of all pretenders who have come after him has proved.'³ He appeared at a time when Persia and Byzantium were at constant strife, the ruling class was living in luxury and extravagance, while the common people were regarded as the rightful property of their rulers. Religion and morals were in a state of anarchy and confusion. In Arabia itself, the tribes were at variance; rivalry and war, idolatry and a general state of moral decadence prevailed. In general, the bonds of society were broken down everywhere, throughout all the nations. When Muhammad came, his great concern was to save his people, and deliver the world from its evil. He was in no position to seek power as a king, or a political leader; the *Quraysh* themselves had no thoughts of that sort, but were satisfied with their claims to honour on the grounds

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 92, 93; Michel, translation, p. 58.

² *Ibid.*, p. 124; Michel, p. 77; cf. also, *Intro.*, p. lxxii. It was Al-Ghazzālī (d. A.D. 1111), who first found in the moral influence of the prophets a proof for the authenticity of their mission.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 201; Michel, p. 122. Cf. also, on the finality of Islām below, p. 175.

of genealogy. Muḥammad was poor, he had no social position, no fame as a poet or orator, nothing to commend him especially, either to the common people or to the leaders. Although the people were indifferent or opposed to him, yet he approached them with proof, and words of warning and advice. Whence, then, his great power and influence? It was his apostleship which raised him up to the heights which he attained. This power in one naturally so weak, and this wisdom in one who was illiterate, were only because he was the messenger and spokesman of God. This is the greatest proof of his apostleship; illiterate, he taught scholars to understand what they were teaching, and reading, and writing. His eloquence and wisdom and power are thus an evidentiary miracle, confirming his mission.¹

The Qur'ān itself is the greatest miracle. Its inimitability (*i'jāz*) in eloquence and style is such that the Arabs were not able to produce anything like it, although, at the time of Muḥammad's mission, they had attained their highest development in the art of eloquence; nor have they been able to do so since that time. If the Arabs have not been able to rival it in their own language, it is not to be expected that any other nation can do so. This miracle of eloquence, therefore, is a proof that the Qur'ān is not of human composition, but is 'a light that radiates from the sun of the Divine Knowledge.'²

Cult of Saints.

This topic is closely related to the foregoing doctrine of the prophets, and is discussed by Muḥammad 'Abduh in his chapters on prophecy. The particular points which he discusses are the rank of the saints as compared with that of the prophets, and the possibility of the occurrence of miracles at their hands, as evidence of their enjoyment of the Divine favour. These miracles are called, in Muslim terminology, *karāmāt* (grace-gifts, charismata), to distinguish them from the *mu'jizāt* (evidentiary miracles) of the prophets. From the earliest days, Islām has believed in the possibility of

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 144 sqq.; Michel, translation, pp. 89 sqq.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 160 sqq.; Michel, translation, pp. 99 sqq.

certain men and women attaining to a position of special nearness to God and favouritism with Him, by reason of their peculiar piety and unremitting practice of acts of devotion and asceticism. To these Friends of His (*awliyā*, sing. *walī*), God imparts special gifts of illumination, and, at times, powers of a supernatural order. With the development of mysticism, and more particularly, with the rise and growth of the so-called dervish orders and the ecstatic practices connected with them, a recognized cult of saints has been evolved which is a part of orthodox Muslim belief. As a result of the belief that these saints have access to the favour of God to a degree denied to ordinary believers, their intercession with God is held to have power with Him; and the practice of visitation of the tombs of the saints has grown up as a part of popular Islām.

Muhammad 'Abduh recognizes that there are those who 'possess elevated souls and exalted minds', to whom religious insight is given. They are not of the same rank as the prophets, but are content to be their friends (*awliyā*) and to remain faithful to their teaching. Many of them have attained a position which is near to that of the prophets. In some of their ecstatic states, they have cognizance, to a certain extent, of the unseen world, and they have visions, the reality of which is not to be denied. The proof of the genuineness of their experiences lies in their upright moral character, the good influence which they exert, and their efforts for the betterment of others. There is no lack of those who assume the character of saints, but how quickly is their true character discovered, and how miserable their end and that of the people who have been deceived by them! Their influence is only evil, misleading the minds, corrupting the character, and debasing the morals of all the people.¹

As for the possibility of the performance of miracles by the saints, the possibility is admitted, he says, by the majority of the Ash'arite theologians, although denied by the Mu'tazilites and a number of others. The investigation of this subject, he continues, is connected with the investigation of a number of other questions, such as the capabilities of the

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 125, 126; Michel, translation, pp. 77, 78.

human spirit, its relation to the universe as a whole, the value of good works, and the progress of the soul in perfection. The logical possibility of the working of extraordinary powers through the medium of persons other than the prophets is not denied by reasonable persons. The one thing that requires to be noticed, however, is that all Muslims, orthodox and otherwise, are agreed that no one is required to believe in the occurrence of any specified miracle (*karāmah*) at the hands of any specified saint, since the appearance of Islām. Any Muslim, then, according to the consensus of opinion (*ijmā'*) of the Community, can deny the occurrence of any 'karāmah', of whatever sort, at the hands of any saint, whoever he may be, without doing violence to any fundamental doctrine of Islām, or any genuine tradition, unless it be, possibly, some traditions concerning the Companions.¹

'How far this principle (just enunciated) is', he concludes, 'from the belief of the mass of the people that the miracles of the saints are a kind of hocus-pocus in which the saints vie with one another, and in which each boasts of his superiority! But with that sort of thing, God has nothing to do, nor does His religion, nor do His saints, nor all people who have knowledge.' This is but a mild expression of his disapproval of the popular abuses which have grown up about this doctrine of the saints. Elsewhere, particularly in his *Commentary*, he pours out reproof and ridicule upon the excessive reverence which the people show towards all reputed saints, and the practice of visiting their tombs and entreating their intercession. They subject themselves to imposters and tricksters, and tremble before unusual natural phenomena. If any sort of accident befall them, for which they have been responsible by their own actions, they see therein the working of some holy man or other. Thus you see them always worrying and fretting over coming events. This comes to pass because they are not good monotheists, but are swayed by heathen impulses, which keep them in continual concern about what is going to happen.²

On the matter of the intercession of the prophets and others

¹ Ibid., p. 226; Michel, translation, p. 140.

² *Al-Manār*, vi. 805, comment on Sūrah ii. 106. Quoted by Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 367. Cf. further, below, on the fight led by *Al-Manār* against abuses, Chapter VIII.

on behalf of the believers, 'Abduh does not express himself in his *Risālah*. But he has something to say of it in his *Commentary*, as, for example, on Sūrah ii. 45: 'Fear ye the day when soul shall not satisfy for soul at all, nor shall any intercession be accepted from them', &c.

'It will be of no advantage to you on the Day of Resurrection', he remarks on this verse, 'to excuse yourselves for turning aside from the understanding of the Qur'ān by saying that some of your ancestors were accustomed to understand it and reflect on it, and you have ceased to understand it and reflect on it because of your satisfaction with their understanding and reflection. And if the understanding of your ancestors will not be of any avail with respect to your turning aside from the guidance of the Book, neither will their intercession be of any advantage to you. Nor will any justice or atonement be accepted which ye might present as a recompense for your excesses. . . . The Jews were accustomed to present atonement, and trust in the intercession of their prophets; but God here informs them that nothing else will take the place of being guided by His Book.'

It is not surprising, in view of the foregoing sentiments, to learn that he was accused of denying the principle of intercession. In Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā's *Biography*, a reply to this accusation is given by a certain shaikh who had heard 'Abduh in an extended discussion of the matter. He supported intercession, the writer states, from the Qur'ān, from the Traditions, and from the Muslim Agreement, and said that it is a doctrine that no one can deny. But it is not like intercession as we know it, in which one person intervenes on behalf of another to secure the alleviation of the proposed sentence or the relinquishment of punishment altogether. Since the will of God acts always in accordance with His eternal foreknowledge, the only sense in which intercession is possible with Him is, that He knows and wills that He will not punish so-and-so, though a malefactor, simply because of His clemency and graciousness; but that, for the sake of showing forth the excellence of the intercessor on the Day of Judgement, He makes the manifestation of the pardon dependent upon the form of intercession which takes place by means of the intercessor on that Day.¹

¹ *Tārīkh*, iii. 206, 207. Horten (*Beiträge*, xiv. 118) states that 'Abduh

Doctrine of Morals.

The basis of the distinction between right and wrong, between virtue and vice, Muhammad 'Abduh finds in the ability, which is inherent in the human intellect, to judge both ideas and actions as being, in themselves or in their results, either beautiful or ugly.

We find within ourselves, he reasons, a distinction between material things that are beautiful, and those that are ugly. Not all persons have the same ideas of beauty and ugliness; yet some things generally excite an impression of beauty, such as flowers. The apprehension of beauty arouses sentiments of pleasure or wonder, and ugliness those of repulsion or fear. This power of distinction is characteristic of man, and even of some animals. Man is sensible of the same distinctions in the realm of ideas, although the criteria by which he judges them are different. He finds beauty in the idea of perfection: God as Necessary Existence, for example, or the noble moral qualities of men. On the other hand, defectiveness, in mind or character or will and the like, commonly imparts an impression of ugliness. Similarly, voluntary actions, which are apprehended by our senses and our intellectual powers just as are the phenomena of nature, either in themselves or in their consequences, make an impression upon our minds no less than do the images of material things. Thus, some actions, equally with beautiful material things, in themselves cause pleasure. Examples of this are found in well-ordered military evolutions, or perfectly executed gymnastic exercises, or a masterly performance upon some musical instrument. Other actions are ugly in themselves, as the disordered bodily movements of weak-souled persons when overwhelmed by fear.

Further, some actions that cause pain, like blows and wounds, seem ugly; and others that cause delight, like eating to the man who is hungry, seem beautiful. In making such distinctions, man differs little from the higher animals, except in the degree of clearness or keenness with which the distinction is made. Voluntary actions may also be distinguished as beautiful or ugly according to the idea of their utility or harmfulness. Distinctions of this sort are possible only to man. Some actions are pleasurable but are judged to be ugly because of their harmful consequences; for example, excess in eating or drinking which causes harm to body accepted the orthodox belief regarding the intercession of the saints, and held that it is not contrary to the foreknowledge and the decrees of God.

and mind. Some disagreeable actions appear beautiful because of their results, such as fatigue in gaining a livelihood, resistance of passions, and the like. Or again, the hardships which one endures in his efforts to discover truths of the universe hitherto unknown, count for nothing compared with his satisfaction in being assured of the truth. Similarly, appropriation of what belongs to others, and acts of envy, and like actions, are felt to be ugly because of the disturbance which they cause to the general peace and safety, which eventually reacts upon the one who did these things.

All these distinctions the human reason is capable of making. One set of actions, it calls doing good, the other doing evil. These distinctions are the basis of the recognition of the differences between the virtues and the vices. The distinctions are drawn more or less closely, according to the intelligence of the persons who make them. They are recognized as the causes of happiness or misery in this life, and as the reasons for the progress or decline of civilization, and of the strength or weakness of nations. These things man can discover by his reason, or his senses, without the aid of revelation, as may be determined from the case of children too young to discern the distinctions of the Law, or from the case of primitive man.¹

However, although men of reason and reflection and moderation are able to discover a correct code of morals apart from revelation, there have been very few during the past history of mankind who have actually done so; and even they do not agree regarding the individual actions which should go to constitute such a code. As for the great mass of mankind, their needs are so varied, their competitions and rivalries, with one another and with the forces of nature, so intense, their temptations so powerful, that reason has proved to be a not infallible guide. Thus, the actual history of man has shown his need of the guidance of the prophets, to direct him to a code of morals and doctrines which is acceptable to God and which will be the means of securing his happiness in this life and in that which is to come.²

¹ *Risālah*, pp. 73-9; Michel, translation, pp. 46-50. In these ideas 'Abduh is following Al-Farābī and the Mu'tazilites. Michel, pp. lxxiv sqq. For Horten's statement of these ideas, cf. *Beiträge*, xiv. 120.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 80 sqq.; Michel, translation, pp. 50 sqq. See also above, on the necessity for prophecy, pp. 155 sqq.

While reason alone is thus insufficient as a guide to men's actions, its insufficiency as a controlling moral force which enables them to correct their practices and resist their temptations is particularly evident. Another part of man's nature must therefore be brought into play, namely, his religious sense or feeling, which is the basis upon which religious beliefs and practices rest.¹ 'Religion', he says, further, in definition of this basis, 'more resembles a natural instinctive impulse than an influence to which response is made of free choice. It is one of the greatest faculties which man possesses; but it is subject to the same maladies which may affect his other faculties.'² When this part of man's nature is appealed to, and only then, do beliefs have a formative influence upon character and actions. 'For religion is the most potent factor in the formation of moral traits, not only for the great mass of the people but also for the chosen few; and its authority over their souls is greater than the authority of reason, which is the distinguishing trait of their kind.'³ But in the true religion, both reason and the religious emotions are so wedded together that each makes its proper appeal. 'The perfect religion consists of knowledge and experience, intellect and heart, proof and acceptance, thought and emotion. If religion is restricted to one of these two elements, one of its bases has dropped out; and it cannot stand upon the other alone.'⁴

Of the place of religion in the life, both of the nation and the individual, 'Abduh has much to say. In national life it is the secret of progress and success. 'To follow the apostles and the guidance of religion', he declares in his comment on Sūrah iv. 14, 'is the basis of all civilization. For it is advancement in things of the spirit which incites to material advancement.' And in support of this principle, he quotes a similar sentiment from Herbert Spencer, whom he calls 'chief of the philosophers on social questions'.⁵ He wrote an article on 'Bismark

¹ Ibid., pp. 138, 139; Michel, pp. 85, 86.

² Ibid., p. 141; Michel, p. 87. Cf. above, p. 127.

³ Ibid., p. 140; Michel, p. 86.

⁴ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, p. 136.

⁵ *Al-Manār*, xii. 805. On his admiration for Spencer see above, p. 95. The emphasis which he places upon the principles of sociology and history is perhaps traceable to his study of Ibn Khaldūn. For example, on the

and Religion', in which he quotes some remarks of that statesman, to prove to young men that faith and religion do not constitute a weakness, either in thought or learning or political leadership.¹ Of the influence of religion upon the individual, the following is an example of much that he wrote: 'Religion is the abiding place of serenity, the resort of tranquillity. Through its influence, each one accepts with contentment the lot which has been assigned to him; through its influence, he perseveres in his efforts until he accomplishes the aim towards which his work was directed; through it, men's souls submit themselves to the requirements of the general laws of the universe; through it, man regards those who are above him in learning and virtue, and those who are beneath him in wealth and position, in the manner which the Divine commands have prescribed.'²

The essential morality advocated by Muhammad 'Abduh may be summed up in the words: 'faith in God alone, and sincerity in the performance of the prescribed religious duties (*'ibādah*); and the mutual aid of all men, one to another, in the doing of good and the prevention of evil in so far as they are able'.³ This, he says, is the essential message of the one universal religion of God, which is the same in all ages. It is characteristic of all his teaching that he attaches the greatest importance to these three fundamental duties, or rather attitudes, of religion: faith, sincerity, mutual co-operation. A fourth should perhaps be added, that of justice. He includes it in a formula similar to the preceding in his *Risālah*,⁴ and the idea receives frequent emphasis. Illustration of these matters may be given in detail.

Faith in God is the first essential of religion. He finds this to be the teaching of Sūrah ii. 172: 'He is pious who believeth in God', &c. This verse begins with the mention of belief in God and the Last Day 'because it is the basis of all piety and the source of every good work'.⁵ And later, on the same

place of religion in national life, cf. the statement in Arnold, *The Caliphate* (1924), p. 74: Ibn Khaldūn 'lays it down that the most solid basis for an empire is religion'.

² *Risālah*, p. 141; Michel, translation, p. 87.

³ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, p. 47.

⁴ *Risālah*, p. 157; Michel, p. 97.

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 412, 413.

⁵ *Tafsīr*, ii. 121.

passage, he adds: 'Piety is only faith and the outward manifestation of its influence upon the soul and upon the actions.' But faith will not be the root of all piety 'unless it has control over the soul by proof, and is accompanied by submission and approval. . . . The faith required is a true knowledge which rules the reason by proof and the soul by obedience, until God and His Apostle are dearer to the believer than all else, and their influence is greater than all else.' But the faith that is derived by mere acceptance of belief on authority and not by conviction and assent, 'leaves its possessor still disturbed at heart, and dead in soul. If good comes to him, he rejoices boastfully; if evil, he despairs unbelievably'. Thus one may grow up a Muslim and come to have Muslim beliefs by hearsay, but such faith will not inspire him to piety, even though he has memorized the whole *Catechism of Al-Sanūsī* with its proofs.¹

His emphasis upon sincerity in the performance of religious duties is but a consequence of his belief in the essential inwardness of true religion, and his conviction that religion, to be effective as a corrective and formative influence, must engage the emotional nature (*wijdān*, *qalb*) and not be simply a matter of formal belief or empty ritual. He believed that the ritual of Islām was well adapted to arouse true religious sentiments. Thus, in regard to the ritual of prayer, he says: 'There is no doubt that the form of prayer prescribed in the *Qur'ān* is the best aid in calling before the worshipper the power and goodness and graciousness of God.' The bending and the prostration strengthen in the soul the idea of worship and of the greatness of the Deity; and the various other attitudes of prayer are examined from the same point of view.² At the same time he realized the great danger of formal repetition and thoughtless performance; hence, such reminders as the following are frequent: 'All the preceding (Explanation of duties, &c.) indicates to us that the important matter in connexion with the performance of all religious duties is to retain in the mind the thought of God, who corrects the soul and enlightens the spirit, so that they turn towards the good and keep on guard against evil and

¹ *Tafsīr*, ii. 121, 122.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 438, 439. On *Sūrah* ii. 240.

disobedience; and thus the one who performs these duties becomes one of the God-fearing.¹

Performance of the stated prayers is one of the most important duties prescribed by Islām. 'Abduh recognized it as the central duty of all, and sought to enhance its religious value as an act of worship in which both heart and mind are engaged as well as the body. This appears clearly in his comment on Sūrah ii. 139.

The prayer which is much described and much praised in the Qur'ān, he says, is 'the turning towards God, and the presence of the heart before Him, and entire immersion in the consciousness of His awe-inspiring greatness and His majesty and omnipotence. This is the prayer of which God says, "It is a hard duty, indeed, but not to the humble" (Sūrah ii. 42). . . . The well-known forms are not meant, the upright position, the genuflexion, the prostration, especially not the recitation with the lips, all of which any lad able to grasp them can become accustomed to, and which we see practised by people who are accustomed to them, while at the same time they persistently commit evil deeds and forbidden acts. What value, then, do such easily performed bodily movements have, that God describes them as difficult except to the humble? Those movements and words are prescribed only as a form of prayer to serve as a means to remind the neglectful and arouse the indifferent and to incite the one who is praying to turn to God.'² And again: 'If one is unable to perform all these bodily movements, that fact does not prevent him from engaging in that heart worship which is the spirit of prayer and of all other religious duties.'³

In like spirit, he treats the performance of the Pilgrimage to Mecca. 'If hypocrisy and love of notoriety are the motives which lead to making the Pilgrimage, then the Pilgrimage is a sin to the hypocrite and not an act of obedience. And if hypocrisy is present during the Pilgrimage ritual, it is said that the performance will not be accepted by God, because of the statements which affirm that God will not accept anything except what is sincerely done for His sake.'⁴ And

¹ *Tafsīr*, ii. 139, on Sūrah ii. 199.

² *Ibid.*, p. 38. Quoted by Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 341. Cf. *Beiträge*, xiv. 122.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 439, on Sūrah ii. 240.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 214, on Sūrah ii. 192. In the same passage he refers the reader to the *Iḥyā* of Al-Ghazzālī for a full statement on 'Hypocrisy'. The spirit of Al-Ghazzālī is evident in the manner in which 'Abduh treats all religious duties. See further, below, Chapter VIII, under 'Formative Influences'.

elsewhere he writes: 'When the intention (in any religious duty) becomes in any way tainted with a portion of the world, the action ceases to be a sincere religious act, and God will not accept anything that is not free from worldly taint.'¹

He insists on justice in the payment of the prescribed legal alms (*zakāt*). He pours out his scorn on the devices practised for the purpose of evading payment, which are countenanced by the canon lawyers under the designation of 'stratagems permitted by the Divine Law'. 'To connect this foolishness with the Divine Law', he declares in indignation, 'is a greater proof of unbelief than is the act itself of withholding payment; since it is not reasonable that God would lay down a law for us and confirm it seventy times, and then be willing that we should devise stratagems against Him, and attempt to deceive Him with respect to abandoning the law, and imagine that He has given permission to use this deceit and trickery.'² Further on the subject of justice, he maintains that capital punishment for murder should be retained as a general law, as prescribed by the *Qur'ān*, although some legislators in our day, even among Muslims, advocate moral training for the reclamation of the criminal instead. 'But one who has regard for the general welfare of the nations rather than his own particular feelings or those of his own country, must see that just and equitable punishment is the fundamental rule which trains nations and peoples, and that to abandon it entirely would encourage the evil-minded to shed blood.' Imprisonment and hard labour may act as a deterrent in some European countries, but in some other countries, as in Egypt, he thinks that imprisonment is rather an encouragement to crime, for the culprit considers the prison better than his own house and calls it a lodging-place or hotel.³

The foregoing extracts from his teaching illustrate the manner in which he interpreted the forms and duties prescribed by Islām. In the same spirit he applies the moral precepts of the *Qur'ān*, seeking to determine the fundamental principle involved and its applicability to present-day conditions. Thus he finds urgent necessity for stricter observance

¹ Ibid., p. 191, on *Sūrah ii. 184*. ² Ibid., pp. 129, 130, on *Sūrah ii. 171*.

³ Ibid., pp. 136, 137, on *Sūrah ii. 173*.

of the injunctions of the *Qur'ān* regarding wine and gambling. Present-day medical science confirms the statement of the *Qur'ān* that the harmful effects of wine-drinking outweigh its advantages. He expresses his concern for the future of the Egyptian people if the use of intoxicants, with the accompanying evils of prostitution, continues to increase.¹ The virtues are to society what the force of gravity is to the physical universe, the cohesive force which holds it together and makes for unity, while the vices are disruptive in their influence.² Of all the virtues, perseverance is the chief and fundamental one. 'It is the mother of all virtues, and there is no virtue that is not in need of it.' It is mentioned seventy times in the *Qur'ān*, no other virtue has been given like mention. The meaning of perseverance in all these verses is 'the faculty of steadfastness and endurance, by virtue of which its possessor considers lightly all that befalls him in the course of his defence of the truth and assistance of virtue'. It appears therefore, only in a voluntary work undertaken on behalf of the public good, in which opposition is likely to be encountered. Thus not all who endure disagreeable things are among the persevering.³

Muhammad 'Abduh's theory of corporate unity and also of corporate morality, within the Muslim Community as a whole or within the individual nation, was based upon the principle of mutual co-operation and encouragement in the restraint of evil and the promotion of the good. Such a verse as *Sūrah* iii. 100, afforded textual authority for such a position: 'That there may be among you a people who invite to the Good and enjoin the Just and forbid the Wrong.' One of the accepted principles of society, he says in introducing his comment, is that no people can exist as an independent entity unless there be some bond that binds them together and gives them unity, so that they become a living community, as though they were a single body. This verse reveals such a bond. The sense of the verse is not that some part of the people

¹ *Tafsīr*, ii. 328 sqq., on *Sūrah* ii. 216.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 272 sqq., article from *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, on 'The Virtues and the Vices and their Results. Causes of the Decay of Nations.' Cf. *Beiträge*, xiv. 123.

³ *Tafsīr*, ii. 35, 36, on *Sūrah* ii. 148.

should discharge the duty of inviting, and thus the duty be a general one, sufficiently discharged when performed by a certain part of the Community (*fard kifāyah*), as interpreted by some commentators; but the duty is an individual one (*fard 'ain*) which every member of the Community must perform. As though the meaning were, 'that I may find in you a people', &c. (i.e. find you to be a people). This duty presupposes only such a degree of knowledge as can be obtained by the generality of the people from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, and does not require a knowledge of special treatises on ethics and canon law. This duty of inviting is, first of all, the duty of Muslims towards other peoples, since Islām is for all peoples. And, in the second place, it is the duty of Muslims towards one another. Those specially qualified in law and religion are to take the initiative in instructing the people; and the individuals of the Community are to follow their leadership in giving advice and encouragement to one another. This will prevent the spread of evil, will establish the good, and will make divisions and sects impossible.¹ He had also much to say in commendation of co-operation in promotion of the public welfare of the Community and in carrying forward its benevolent works.²

The True Islām.

'If any one wishes to pass judgement on any religion, whether a favourable or unfavourable judgement with respect to any particular matter', Shaikh 'Abduh once wrote in one of his controversial works, 'he should look at it as it is when purified of all the accretions which have originated from the customs of those who profess it, and the matters which they have added to it, perhaps derived from some other religion. . . . He should consider its principles as they are determined by the words and actions of the men who were nearest in time to the appearance of the religion, and who received it in the simplicity in which it was transmitted from the founder of the religion himself.'³ This was the principle which he adopted

¹ *Tafsīr*, iv. 25-9.

² As, for example, on Sūrah ii. 216; *Tafsīr*, ii. 343.

³ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, p. 22. Quoted by Michel, p. xlvi.

in his discussion of Christianity in the work from which quotation has just been made; it was the principle which he followed in determining what are the essentials of Islām to which return should be made, to the exclusion of much that is now regarded as belonging to Islām but, in reality, is foreign to it and even contradictory to its spirit. 'I raised my voice', he said, to quote once more his own statement of his essential aims, 'to summon to two important matters. The first was, to free the mind from the chains of belief on authority, and to understand the religion (of Islām) as the early generation understood it, before the appearance of divisions among them, and to return to the original sources of the branches of the sciences (of Islām) in order to attain a proper knowledge of them.'¹

It will not be necessary here to go into any further detail than has already been done, in indicating the manner in which he applied this principle in the sphere of beliefs. The succeeding chapter will show how he proposed to apply it to canon law and in the elimination of practices which he considered harmful or foreign to Islām. It will be sufficient here, in concluding the present chapter, to make only a general remark concerning his method of procedure. The indispensable essentials of Islām are held to be 'that which is in the Book (i.e. the *Qur'ān*) and a small part of the *Sunnah* (Usage of the Prophet) relating to matters of practice'.² This brief statement is explained by what he says on *Sūrah* iv. 62, which reads: 'O ye who believe! Obey God and obey the Apostle and those among you invested with authority; and if in aught ye differ, bring it before God and the Apostle.' Applying these words to the present time, the meaning is: obedience to God is to follow His book completely, which contains many prohibitions of differences and divisions into sects in religion; obedience to the Apostle after his death is to follow his *Sunnah*. Matters of belief and practice are to be determined by reference to these two sources, in other words, the beliefs and practices of the early Muslims are once more to be adopted, without additions or omissions. The third

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 892, 893. Also quoted by Michel, p. xliii.

² *Risālah*, p. 224; Michel, translation, p. 137.

class mentioned, 'those invested with authority', are the men of position and influence, such as the 'Ulamā and the leaders, who are known in the language of to-day as 'the representatives of the nation'. To them are to be referred all judicial, administrative, and political affairs (including the revision of the canon law of Islām), which they will determine 'according to the principles of the Divine Law respecting the conservation of advantages and the averting of evils, and in harmony with the conditions of the time and the locality'.¹

By following this method of returning to the simplest and most essential form of Islām, a basis would be found upon which all Muslims could unite, and which, at the time, would prove acceptable and sufficient as the one religion for all mankind. It would then appear that the present regulations of Islām regarding divorce, polygamy, slavery, and the like, do not belong to the essentials of Islām, but are subject to modification according to circumstances.² The real nature of Islām would then be manifested, as the final expression of the true religion of God which is the same in all ages, which in 'its spirit and the essentials which it requires of all men by the mouth of all the prophets and apostles' does not change.³ Islām is the final expression of this religion. Christianity came at an earlier stage in man's development, it appealed entirely to the emotions, and inculcated ideals of asceticism and other-worldliness that were contrary to the nature of man and were therefore soon repudiated or modified to suit the desires or the needs of those who professed this religion. But Islām came when man had reached his fullest development and had learned from past experiences. It addressed itself to reason in the direction of man, but it enlisted also the emotions.⁴ In some respects Judaism and Christianity and Islām may all appear as 'branches that grew out of one common root, which was the true religion, and that these branches do not destroy the unity of this one religion'. But examined more closely, Islām is seen to combine the essentials of all,

¹ *Tafsīr*, iii. 8-12.

² *Tārīkh*, ii. 515, open letter to an English clergyman.

³ *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, p. 47. Also *Risālah*, pp. 181-3; Michel, translation, pp. 111, 112.

⁴ *Risālah*, p. 187; Michel, p. 115.

and is thus 'the most excellent means of preparing the human spirit for attaining the highest stage of perfection in faith'.¹ It is thus the supreme function of Islām to unite all men in the bonds of one true religion.²

¹ *Tārīkh*, ii. 513–15, letter above referred to.

² *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, p. 48.

CHAPTER VIII

MUḤAMMAD RASHĪD RIḌĀ AND *AL-MANĀR*

THE name of Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā has received frequent mention in the preceding pages. As the leading pupil of Muḥammad 'Abduh during the latter's lifetime, and, since his death, his biographer, editor of his works, and the one who has principally carried on his tradition and interpreted his doctrines, his name cannot be mentioned otherwise than frequently in any study of the movement inaugurated by Muḥammad 'Abduh. Even more frequent have been the references to the pages of *Al-Manār*, the periodical founded by Rashīd Riḍā as the mouthpiece for the propagation of 'Abduh's doctrines and the accomplishment of his reforms. Some account is required, therefore, of the man who has been perpetuating 'Abduh's influence for the quarter of a century since his death, and of the organ of which he has been the founder and editor. In this account are included some projects and activities which might logically have been dealt with earlier, in connexion with the biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh, such as some of his reforms, notably that of canon law, and the preparation and publication of his *Commentary*, but have been reserved for consideration here because of their close identification with *Al-Manār* and its editor.

Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā.

Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā is a Syrian by nationality. He comes of a family which claims descent from the family of the Prophet, as denoted by his right to receive the title 'Al-Sayyid'. His education was received in the schools of Tripoli in Syria (*Ṭarābalus*), and was of the type usually received by the "ālīm" or 'shaikh'. He completed his studies and was granted the diploma of "ālīm" in the year 1897.¹ His master during the period of his more advanced studies was Shaikh Ḥusain al-Jisr, a Syrian scholar who wrote a work in defence of Islām and dedicated it to the Sulṭān 'Abd al-Ḥamīd of Turkey, under the title of *Al-risālah*

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 652.

al-Ḥamīdiyyah.¹ This work, Snouck Hurgronje thinks, is significant of the changed attitude of Muslim scholars towards Western thought in regard to Islām. Shaikh Ḥusain shows in his work that he knows theology and law; but whereas an earlier orthodox writer would not have troubled about infidel views or would have advised an appeal to the sword, he feels that the time has gone when Muslims can ignore all arguments against their faith. He, therefore, tries to show that true humanity, morality, and reason find their highest expression in the law and doctrine of Islām. He confutes sundry philosophic and materialistic difficulties in Islām, as raised by Western scholars, and even considers Darwinism, but holds that, even if it were true, it would not necessarily be in conflict with the Qur'ān.²

Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā has little to say in his writings about the influence of Ḥusain al-Jisr upon his later beliefs. It would seem, from the above account of Ḥusain's ideas, that he might have prepared in the mind of his pupil a certain sympathy towards the ideas of Muḥammad 'Abduh which he later embraced. Although Shaikh Ḥusain was somewhat advanced in some of his ideas, he did not approve, however, of the lengths to which his pupil later went in his advocacy of reform. When the first issue of *Al-Manār* appeared, he wrote to Rashīd Riḍā as follows: '*Al-Manār* has appeared, gleaming with unaccustomed yet pleasing lights (the title *Al-Manār* signifies 'The Lighthouse'), except that these lights are made up of powerful rays that almost impair the vision.'³ He later wrote some caustic criticisms of the course pursued by *Al-Manār*.

If Rashīd Riḍā has said little concerning his earlier studies, he is less reticent in regard to the effect which the reading of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah* had upon his mind. He once happened upon a number of old copies which were in possession of his father. These he devoured with great eagerness, and then began the search, from house to house, for the remaining numbers which, when found, he copied out with his

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 456; i. 2; Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 324.

² *The Achehnese*, C. Snouck Hurgronje; translated by A. W. S. O'Sullivan, Leyden, 1906, ii. 345 sqq. The date of Ḥusain al-Jisr's work is given as about A.H. 1306/A.D. 1889.

³ *Al-Manār*, i. 2.

own hands. He was able to complete the numbers, as many as had been published, from copies in the possession of Shaikh Ḥusain al-Jisr. The articles in these papers made a profound impression upon him and caused him, as he says, to enter upon a new period in his life. Before that time he had been given to Ṣūfism, and engrossed in religious and ascetic practices. In teaching the Qur'ān to the common people of his village he had emphasized its threats and warnings, and the doctrines that inspire fear and inculcate asceticism in this life. His chief concern had been orthodoxy of belief and practice; if he had any thought of reform, it was of a purely local character. But the reading of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah* changed all this. Its appeals for the reform of Islām as a whole, and the regeneration of all Muslim nations and the restoration of the early glory of Islām, placed a new ideal before him and inspired within him new desires. His first teacher, he says, had been the *Iḥyā* of Al-Ghazzālī, which was the first book to take possession of his mind and heart. His second teacher was *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, which changed the course of his life.

As a result of his reading of these papers, he conceived the desire to join himself to Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, who had but lately arrived in Constantinople. He wrote to Jamāl al-Dīn to this effect. But since Jamāl continued to reside in Constantinople until the end of his days, this desire was never accomplished. After Jamāl's death, Rashīd Riḍā wished to go to Egypt to become associated with Muḥammad 'Abduh; and, as opportunity to do so was offered at the close of his studies in Tripoli, he left Syria for Egypt in the month of Rajab, A.H. 1315 (A.D. 1897). On the morning following his arrival in Cairo, he sought out Muḥammad 'Abduh and attached himself to him as his pupil. The association thus begun continued, in increasing intimacy, until 'Abduh's death in 1905. Shaikh 'Abduh, on his part, loved and trusted his pupil; and the latter regarded his master with unbounded admiration and respect, and celebrated his praises as the greatest teacher of Islām in modern times.¹

¹ Autobiographical references are given briefly in *Al-Manār*, viii. 456, and at greater length, in xxviii. 650 sqq.; also *Tārīkh*, i. 84, 85.

Of Rashīd Riḍā's scholarship, it will be sufficient to say, in view of the lack of detail concerning his actual studies, that his writings display attainments of considerable merit in the usual Muslim sciences. He has attempted no independent work in either theology or philosophy, but in editing the works of his master and in his notes and comments on the same he shows his grasp of the subjects involved. The field in which he has shown particular proficiency is the field of the Traditions. The emphasis which the 'Abduh movement places upon the 'genuine' Sunnah only, as one of the essential sources of the revised Islām, has made this necessary. In the ability to test the genuineness of the various traditions, he has developed, in Goldziher's opinion, 'a great mastership that reminds one at times of the ancient classics of Ḥadīth criticism'.¹ His writings give evidence, also, of familiarity with a number of modern sciences, which he turns skilfully to account in his interpretation and defence of Islām.

'*Al-Manār*'.

Soon after his arrival in Cairo, Rashīd Riḍā embarked on his venture in journalism. *Al-Manār* appeared on the twenty-second of Shawwāl, A.H. 1315 (March 17, 1898),² as a weekly journal of eight pages, containing telegrams of the week and news items, some of which were of only temporary interest or value, in addition to the special articles. Beginning with the second year, the form was changed to that of a monthly periodical. The reception accorded to the new venture was at first discouraging. The copies sent to Syria and Turkey were intercepted by the Turkish Government, while the majority of the copies sent to prospective subscribers in Egypt were returned. By the end of the third year, the number of subscribers did not exceed three or four hundred. The fifth year, however, marked a beginning in an increase of circulation. By the twelfth year (1909), remaining copies of Volume I were selling for four times the original price; a

¹ *Koranauslegung*, p. 335.

² *Al-Manār*, i. 1. The date of the first issue is there given as ten days from the end of Shawwāl, A. H. 1315/A.D. 1897. But the actual date as given on the first issue of the magazine is as given above. This date is confirmed by that of the closing number of the year, which is March 6, 1899.

second printing was therefore made, in the form which had been followed after the first year.¹ No indications are afforded of the amount of the circulation during recent years.

It was Rashīd Riḍā's desire, in founding *Al-Manār*, to perpetuate the tradition of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthkiah*, except with respect to its political policy which was no longer called for.² The general purpose of reform was the same as that for which the earlier publication had laboured. Some of the items included within this general purpose are the following: to promote social, religious, and economic reforms; to prove the suitability of Islām as a religious system under present conditions, and the practicability of the Divine Law as an instrument of government; to remove superstitions and beliefs that do not belong to Islām, and to counteract false teachings and interpretations of Muslim beliefs, such as prevalent ideas of predestination, the bigotry of the different Schools, or Rites, of Canon law, the abuses connected with the cult of saints and the practices of the Ṣūfī orders; to encourage tolerance and unity among the different sects; to promote general education, together with the reform of text-books and methods of education, and to encourage progress in the sciences and arts; and to arouse the Muslim nations to competition with other nations in all matters which are essential to national progress.³

To this ambitious programme, *Al-Manār* has been dedicated from the first. The editor himself has been the most prolific contributor to its columns; his articles have contained trenchant criticisms of the existing order of things in Egypt and elsewhere in the Muslim world, and zealous advocacy of the principles of Muḥammad 'Abduh. Many articles from the pen of the latter have also appeared in its columns, and contributions from the more zealous of his disciples, and from friends of reform in other Muslim countries. In addition to articles dealing with reform in its various aspects, as indicated above, a section has been devoted, beginning with the third year and continuing until the present, to the publication of Muḥammad 'Abduh's *Commentary on the Kur'ān*; a section, conducted by the editor, devoted to 'fatwās' or decisions on

¹ *Al-Manār*, i. 3, 4.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 340.

³ *Ibid.*, i. 11, 12.

questions concerning matters of law or religion which were addressed to the editor by correspondents, or, perhaps, represented as such, although, in reality, devised by the editor himself, according to generally recognized editorial technique, and which have afforded many opportunities for ridiculing and criticizing the laborious casuistry of the prevailing systems of canon law;¹ and sections containing news items from different Muslim countries, and reviews of books and other publications.

The editor seems to have had a general policy in mind which he intended to pursue over a course of years. A preparatory period, covering the first year or more, was to be given to a review of the general state of Muslim weakness and the need of reform, and an attempt to arouse concern over this condition. Supposing this preparatory period to have been successful, the following period was to set forth the proposals of *Al-Manār*, in accordance with which the needed reforms could be accomplished, and to direct the efforts of the Muslim Community in effecting them. This was the policy which *Al-Manār* followed. The editor, reviewing the results of it in 1905, after a period of eight years, found that his efforts had met with much general approval; many newspapers, imitating *Al-Manār*, took up the cry of reform, until it became the fashion to point out needs and weaknesses, sometimes by those who knew little of them, without any thought of the practical efforts for reform that should result. *Al-Manār*, therefore, returned again for a time to the policy of preparatory agitation.² This was the reply which Rashīd Riḍā made to those who accused him of giving way before the hostile opinions and criticisms that assailed him from a number of sources. There are evidences in later years of similar reversals of policy which may, possibly, be due to similar reasons. As late as the year 1926-7, the editor thought it fitting to publish an article on the general conditions prevailing in Muslim countries, which had been written as long ago as 1905 but had not then been published, because

¹ Cf. Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, pp. 332, 333, for an example of the questions submitted, and the 'fatwā' in reply.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 234.

'the need for it now is as great, or even greater, than at the time of writing'.¹

It was not the intention of the editor of *Al-Manār*, however, to trust to mere agitation and instruction for the accomplishment of reform. For this purpose, he advocated the formation of an Islāmic Society (*Al-jam'iyyah al-Islāmiyyah*) under the patronage of the Caliph, the central branch to be at Mecca, with subsidiary branches in all Muslim countries.² The principle which lay at the base of the organization was the belief that the brotherhood of Islām obliterates racial and national boundaries, and constitutes a bond which unites all Muslims as one community, and that the Sharī'ah, the Divine Law of Islām, can unite all nationalities in equality of government, both Muslim and non-Muslim, even though the latter do not accept the faith of Islām.³ The object of this society was to unite all Muslims in submission to a common code of doctrines and morals, a common code of laws, and a common language, the Arabic, to suppress harmful teachings and practices, and to propagate Islām.⁴ The Ottoman Sultān was to be recognized as the actual leader, as being the most powerful Muslim ruler. But the separate Muslim governments were to be regarded as component states in a confederation resembling that of the United States of America, each ruler to govern with the assistance of a representative assembly, and to enjoy independence in the internal administration of his realm, while all the states together would present a united front to their foes.⁵ This was to be the ideal of Muslim unity. The society, however, was to be entirely dissociated from all political designs; for, although Church and State are essentially united in Islām, on the purely religious side, Rashīd Riḍā contends, no connexion with politics is required, and those who engage in defence of Islām, or in teaching or in propagating, should not engage in politics.⁶

This scheme, which has evident points of similarity to the society founded by Jamāl al-Dīn and Muhammad 'Abduh, although without its political significance, seems to drop more or less into the background with the passing of the

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 765.

² *Ibid.*, i. 766.

³ *Ibid.*, ii. 322-4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, i. 767 sqq.

⁵ *Ibid.*, i. 792, 793.

⁶ *Ibid.*, xiv. 240.

years. *Al-Manār* still preaches the ideal of a united Islām and uniform doctrines and laws; but the society which was actually founded, so far as the record of *Al-Manār* itself goes, was one with somewhat more restricted aims, namely, 'The Society of Propaganda and Guidance' (*Jam'īyyat al-da'wah wa al-irshād*), of which more hereafter.

Influences were coming to the fore in the Near East, however, with which *Al-Manār* was destined to come into conflict in its advocacy of a common Islāmic brotherhood that ignores national lines. In the early years of the twentieth century, the Nationalist Party of Egypt was rejuvenated under the leadership of Muṣṭafā Kāmil Pasha and his party-organ, *Al-Liwā*. This party had no interest in religion or religious reform, but stood for an exclusive nationalism based on racial distinctions, although, according to *Al-Manār*, they excluded also all Egyptians who were not Muslims.¹ Since *Al-Manār* was unfavourable to this idea, it was criticized by *Al-Liwā*. Muḥammad Bey Farīd, who came into the leadership of the party when Muṣṭafā Kāmil died in 1908, continued this policy of opposition through his party-organ, *Al-'Alam*, the editor of which was 'Abd al-'Azīz Shāwīsh, formerly a lecturer in Arabic in Oxford University.² The two Nationalist leaders attributed political designs to *Al-Manār* in the formation of its society.³ In more recent years, *Al-Siyāsah* has drawn the fire of *Al-Manār*, because the former advocates a nationalism in which religion and language are not the determining factors, 'so that they count a Muslim and an Arab (who holds a foremost place in the world of Islām) as a foreigner, if he does not belong to the same country as themselves. Thus the Sharīf (descendant of the Prophet) of the Hījāz or of Syria is no better to them than a heathen from China.'⁴

¹ *Al-Manār*, viii. 478. It should be noted, however, that Muṣṭafā Kāmil's nationalism did not exclude Pan-Islāmic ideals. Cf. *The Truth About Egypt*, pp. 28 sqq.; also *Mashāhīr*, i. 289-301, where, in the biographical account of him, it is stated that on more than one occasion he undertook missions of Pan-Islāmic purport to Constantinople and elsewhere. Cf. also *Tarājīm Miṣriyyah wa Gharbiyyah*, by Dr. Ḥusain Haikal, p. 157. It was hoped that these efforts would eventually bring support to Egypt in her national aims.

² *The Truth about Egypt*, by J. R. Alexander (London, 1911), p. 165.

³ *Al-Manār*, xiv (1911), 36.

⁴ *Ibid.*, xxvii (1926-7), 119.

In other respects, also, the scheme of *Al-Manār* for Muslim unity has received some checks. Rashīd Riḍā had hoped much from the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and the Constitution; in fact, he admits that he himself had worked secretly for the securing of the Constitution from 'Abd al-Ḥamid because of the greater liberty which it would allow for reform activities.¹ But the subsequent rejuvenation of Turkey under Mustafā Pasha Kamāl has defeated these expectations, for the case of this noted leader is one of 'pure unbelief and apostasy from Islām, of which there is no uncertainty'.² However, a new star of hope has appeared with the rise of the Wahhābī dynasty of Ibn Sa'ūd in Arabia. The Government of Ibn Sa'ūd is the greatest Muslim power in the world to-day, says *Al-Manār*, since the fall of the Ottoman dynasty and the transformation of the Government of the Turks into a government without religion, and it is the only government that will give aid to the Sunnah and repudiate harmful innovations and anti-religionism.³

Advances of Muslim thought in other directions, also, are proving as little to Rashīd Riḍā's liking, and are tending to throw him more and more on the side of the Conservatives rather than of the Liberal and progressive element. He has been accustomed to characterize his party as the 'Moderate Party', who mediate between the severely orthodox, on the one hand, whose strength lies in the blind devotion of the common people, and the ultra-progressive element on the other, who favour complete freedom of thought and the adoption of modern civilization and modern forms of government and man-made laws. As contrasted with these, the 'Moderate reformers' affirm that Islām, if interpreted according to their principles, will be found to provide the only adequate solution for modern social, political, and religious problems.⁴ While the claim to be a mediating party is, in some respects, justifiable, the logic of events sometimes proves the editor of *Al-Manār* to be a Conservative of the Conservatives. Unyielding adherence, in the most orthodox sense, to the

¹ Ibid., xiv. 43.

² Ibid., xxviii (1927-8), 581.

³ Ibid., xxvii. 638, also pp. 1-19. In regard to the caliphate, see below, Chapter X, under 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq'. ⁴ Ibid., vii. 52; xxix. 66.

Ḳur'ān, the Sunnah, and the Divine Law is fundamental to his whole manner of thinking ; a more liberal attitude towards these, as, for example, any concession regarding the necessity of retaining the Divine Law of Islām as the fundamental law of all Muslim countries, might weaken or endanger his whole system. Hence, in any question of choice between the Conservative or the Liberal attitude, the position of *Al-Manār* amounts, practically, to that of the orthodox party.

The case of the Nationalists of Egypt and Turkey has already been cited: these *Al-Manār* characterizes as atheists and infidels, because religion is not fundamental to their ideas of nationality. It applies the same designation to two of the younger scholars and writers of Egypt, whose critical attitude towards Islāmic literature and Islāmic institutions will receive notice in the concluding chapter. Enough may be anticipated here to give point to the fact that the attitude of *Al-Manār* towards these writers is not less uncompromising nor its anathemas less fervent than those of the extremely orthodox.

In the *furor* which arose about one of the two cases to which reference has just been made, Rashīd Riḍā had occasion to give expression to his opinion on two questions which grew out of the wide discussion of the matter. His opinion reveals the limitations which he imposes upon scientific scholarship when it affects matters of belief, especially belief in the Ḳur'ān. One of these questions was: If a Muslim, as a result of his studies, comes to entertain an historical or critical belief that is contrary to the teaching of the Ḳur'ān, such as denial of the historical existence of Abraham, does he thereby cease to be considered a Muslim, even though he himself continues to consider himself such in respect to all moral and religious matters? The reply of *Al-Manār* to this is: 'If any one holds a belief contrary to the text of the Ḳur'ān which affords decisive proof, a belief which is a matter of knowledge and not of interpretation, in that he believes that the statement of the Ḳur'ān is not true, then, without doubt, he is not to be counted a member of the Muslim Community. For if any one denies the existence of Adam or Abraham or Ishmael, he is an unbeliever because

he gives the lie to the Word of God.' This does not deny to any one, Rashīd Riḍā continues, the right to interpret certain passages of the Qur'ān in an allegorical manner, as, for example, the story of Adam. Nor does it forbid acceptance of established facts of natural science, even though they be at variance with the apparent sense of the inspired text; for, in that case, the expression of the text is to be interpreted as a metaphorical or figurative use, or an accommodation to common usage, such as the setting of the sun in a fountain or in the sea.¹

The second question grows out of the first: May it not be that, in the near future, educated Muslims will come to distinguish between religious and moral questions in the Qur'ān, on the one hand, and historical and scientific questions, on the other, regarding the Qur'ān as infallible with respect to the first but not so with respect to the second? To this Rashīd Riḍā replies that he considers that 'that contingency is very remote'.²

Reforms.

The general character of the reforms to which the pages of *Al-Manār* have been devoted for the past thirty years has already been indicated, first, in the life and teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh, and, second, in the statement of the purpose for which *Al-Manār* was founded. The fundamental character of these reforms has been described as religious, that is to say, a thorough reform of the religion of Islām is, at once, the central motive which inspires them, the object for which they are undertaken, and the means by which they are to be accomplished. While it is true that the purely religious interest has been given a central place throughout the history of the movement, at the same time it should be remembered that the religion of Islām embraces all departments of the life of its adherents, the civil, social, and political as well as the religious; hence the inclusive character of the reforms attempted.

To begin with, the very conception of the nature and value of the religion of Islām which is commonly held by Muslims

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 581, 582.

² *Ibid.*, p. 582.

requires to be changed, it is maintained. Muslims generally believe that their religion contains some spiritual secret, which operates in a miraculous manner to render help to them and victory, independently of their own character and actions. They need to be taught that its true value does not consist in mysterious powers and gifts, but in the fact that it secures happiness for men in this life as well as in the life to come, by directing to a knowledge of the laws (*sunan*) of God which govern human progress, both for nations and for individuals; men must learn these laws and act upon them with decision, knowing that God does not withhold worldly affairs from those who seek for them by the proper methods, whether they be believers or infidels.¹

The responsibility for the backward state of Muslims belongs principally to their rulers and their religious leaders. Their rulers have been ignorant of Islām and its laws; they have permitted entire freedom in the case of evil-doing and unbelief and limited it in the case of learning and thought, and have substituted laws of human origin for the Divine Law. The 'Ulamā have neglected the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah* and the moral teachings of their religion, and instead have magnified differences of sects, and made much of works of law and theology, and have neglected the training of the people. The shaikhs of the *Ṣūfī* orders, who have come to be the spiritual guides of the people, have made religion a sport and a means of entertainment; the performance of their *zikrs*, which are only a confused mumbling of words, have taken the place of the public prayers, and the boisterous chanting of some of their special forms of petitions, or of portions of the *Qur'ān*, on the occasion of the birthday festival (*mawlid*) of some saint enlists more enthusiasm on the part of the people than do the true religious forms. Thus the hearts of the people have gone astray after their shaikhs; miraculous powers are attributed to them, and they are considered to be a means of blessing, living or dead; and after their death, their tombs become objects of veneration, and their intercession with God is sought for, even for the accomplishment of requests that are logically impossible. In this

¹ *Al-Manār*, i. 586 sqq.

fashion the sins of the people are brought home to them by the reformers, and responsibility for them is laid primarily at the door of the leaders.¹

Of the many objectionable practices which have found their way into Islām as *bida'* (innovations, in this case harmful innovations; sing. *bid'ah*), and the considerations which *Al-Manār* has urged against them in its endeavour to uproot them, it will not be possible to speak, except to mention a few of the most characteristic ones. These practices have been allowed to creep into Islām and gradually gain a hold over the people, it is claimed, either because the learned men and the religious leaders have been too negligent and easy going, or because they have themselves introduced them to strengthen the hold of religion upon the common people.² Many abuses are outgrowths of the cult of saints, such as ascribing to the more noted saints, as 'Abd al-Ḳādir al-Jilānī, names and honours that belong only to God, the offering of prayers and sacrifices at their tombs, and the immoralities and irregularities which characterize the celebration of the annual *mawlid*s, or festivals, of certain of the saints, as that of Aḥmad al-Badawī at Ṭaṇṭā.³ Others are connected with the Ṣūfī orders: the veneration of the people for the shaikhs or heads of these orders, and the blind submission of the initiate to the will of the shaikh, are considered particularly harmful, and the noisy and disorderly performance of the *zikrs* are deplored.⁴ Others are the result of excessive veneration for the Ḳur'ān and other objects that are held in sacred regard: of this sort, are the use of portions of the Ḳur'ān as charms and amulets, the stroking of pillars, stones, and the like, that are popularly believed to possess special powers. Rashīd Riḍā himself once narrowly escaped a near riot of the worshippers in the

¹ *Al-Manār*, i, series of six articles, beginning p. 606, on 'Our Leaders and Chief Men have led us Astray'; On the Ṣūfis, the last article, pp. 722-30; also *Tafsīr*, ii. 98, 99; also two articles in *Al-Manār*, i. 404 sqq., and 423 sqq., on 'Spiritual Authority of the Shaikhs of the Ṣūfī Orders'.

² *Tafsīr*, ii. 99.

³ *Al-Manār*, i. 729; also pp. 77 sqq.; viii. 191, 192; six articles in ii, beginning p. 401, on 'Miracles of the Saints'; on the 'Ṭaṇṭā Mawlid', iv. 594-600.

⁴ Cf. references under footnote 1, above. The topic is recurred to frequently in both *Al-Manār* and the *Commentary*.

Ḥasanain Mosque in Cairo, held in special sanctity as the reputed resting-place of the head of Al-Ḥusain, grandson of the Prophet, because he ventured to address the people assembled there on the futility of expecting to receive blessing from such practices.¹ Still other practices seem to be less harmful in themselves, but are objected to because they are not a part of Islām. For this reason, the decoration of the 'Kiswah', the covering which is sent to Mecca each year from Egypt for the Ka'bah, and the Procession of the 'Maḥmal', at which the official ceremonies of its departure take place, are held to be *bid'ah*.²

The fundamental fault, however, which underlies the present degeneracy is that Islām has been suffered to drift away from its early simplicity. This *Al-Manār* has maintained from its earliest numbers to its latest, as did Muḥammad 'Abduh also. So simple was the religion in its early days that it was easy for other peoples to learn Islām from the Arabs, and thus the rapid spread of Islām was facilitated. Then came the centuries of *bid'ah*. The science of jurisprudence was developed on the ground that the rulers required a wider system of legislation than that afforded by the practical regulations of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. Contact with the thought of other nations led to the development of the science of theology in defence of the articles of belief, and to the introduction of the speculations of philosophy. Thus there was introduced into Islām what does not belong to it, and it ceased to be easy and simple and became difficult and involved. Whereas it was possible for an Arab in the time of the Prophet to learn enough of the religious practices, in 'one sitting', to become a Muslim, in the present day a Muslim, who has grown up among Muslims, can with difficulty learn the requirements of the rite to which he belongs by reason of having inherited adherence to it, in a number of years. 'Thus the decisive characteristics of Islām, that gave it its most perfect form and its most perfect state before any books at all were written, have disappeared.'³

¹ *Al-Manār*, ii. 735; *Tafsīr*, ii. 191. The story of the Ḥasanain Mosque is found in *Al-Manār*, vi. 793; Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 337.

² *Al-Manār*, viii. 839, 840.

³ *Ibid.*, xxix (1928), 63, 64.

All that is required, therefore, is to return to that early form. All the bases (*uṣūl*) of the religion, consisting of correct beliefs, moral and ethical teachings, the religious practices approved by God, and the general principles governing civil relationships, were completed in the time of the Prophet. Further, the moral principles that were to underlie all legal and governmental regulations were also affirmed, such as justice, equality of rights, prohibition of crimes, prescription of punishment for certain offences, government by representation, and the like. In all other matters, the Divine Law-giver delegated detailed legislation to those entrusted with authority, that is, the learned men and the rulers, who are required by the Divine Law to be men of learning and justice, that they may take counsel together and prescribe what is of most advantage to the Community, according to the requirements of the time. The Companions so understood the matter without an express deliverance from the Prophet, as several traditions show. In fact, it is related of them that they decided according to the general welfare even though their decisions were contrary to the Sunnah which was followed, as though they believed that regard for the general welfare was the fundamental consideration, rather than observance of the details of the Law.¹ Muslims should, therefore, return to the practice 'of the early days of the first four caliphs, whose Sunnah, together with his own Sunnah, the Prophet commanded Muslims to hold fast to, and they should lay aside everything that has been introduced into Islām that is contrary to that practice'.²

The details of that practice are to be determined by competent scholars. The articles of belief are to be those which are contained in the *Qur'ān*; these are to be accepted 'without dealing with them in a philosophical manner', although proofs are to be sought for them. Likewise, the moral and ethical teachings of the *Qur'ān* and the Sunnah are sufficient because of their moderation. The excesses of the *Ṣūfis* in spiritual matters, in asceticism, and in some other respects, will thus be avoided.³ The further suggestion is made, that a book be compiled containing all doctrines and moral and

¹ *Ibid.*, iv. 210.

² *Ibid.*, p. 215.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

ethical principles upon which all Muslim sects are in agreement, the book to be simple in style, and to be translated into all the languages in use among Muslims. This book will constitute the essentials of belief upon which all Muslims are to unite; in minor details, differences of belief are permitted, so long as these differences do not include matters that have been declared by common consent to be unbelief, and all who profess this common body of beliefs are to be recognized as Muslims.¹

The religious practices which are to be adopted by all Muslims in common, that is, the prayers, fasts, pilgrimage, and similar duties prescribed by the religious cult of Islām, are to be those which are plainly set forth in the Sunnah (Usage) of the Prophet and which have been recognized, by the uniform practice of succeeding generations, as essential to Islām. Matters in which the early generations differed, as in regard to certain details of the prayer ritual, for example, are to be left to each Muslim to decide for himself which one of the ways practised by the early fathers he should adopt.² Thus, in all essential practices, all Muslims would adopt the requirements of a single rite, or school of canon law (*madhhab*), instead of being divided, as at present, by the innumerable and often inconsequential details of the four schools. There would be many details, of course, which are fully dealt with by the law books of the four rites, but which would not be included within the common body of practices of the single rite. In regard to these details, each Muslim would be free to consult the regulations of all the four rites, or any one of them, and to follow that method of the four which he prefers, instead of being bound, as at present, to the regulations of the one rite to which he belongs; just as a man who is ill consults the physician whom he prefers. Thus every Muslim would be exercising independent investigation (*ijtihād*) by choosing the method which he prefers; at the same time, he would be practising acceptance on authority (*taqlīd*) since he adopts the method of one of the four rites.³ One result to be anticipated from uniformity in essentials and individual

¹ *Al-Manār*, i. 767; iv. 216; xxii. 184.

² *Ibid.*, iv. 216.

³ *Ibid.*, iv. 287, 369; xxii. 184, 185.

freedom in details would be the elimination of bigoted devotion to a single rite and hatred towards the adherents of all others, and thus discussion of differences could take place in a conciliatory spirit.¹

As for the regulations which govern social relations and civil and commercial transactions, these should be separated entirely from religion and should not be inextricably bound up as part of a code that is regarded as sacrosanct and eternally unchangeable, as is the case with the law books of the four rites. While these laws should be based upon the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*, they should be subject to change from age to age, according to the requirements of each age.² The rigid and unchangeable character of the enactments of the four rites is one of the principal reasons for the backwardness of Muslim nations to-day; and because of this, the Divine Law of Islām has been rejected by many Muslim governments as unsuitable for present conditions. This is claimed by *Al-Manār* in many places, and innumerable examples are given showing the necessity of adapting these laws to present conditions. An example or two may be chosen, however, from Rashīd Riḍā's book on *The Caliphate*.³ The caliph whom the Turks chose, when the Caliphate was separated from the State, was a man who was proficient in painting and in playing musical instruments, both of which accomplishments are forbidden by all four Islāmic rites, and most strictly of all by the Ḥanifite rite to which the Turks belong. So strictly are they forbidden, that in one of the courts of Cairo recently, says Rashīd Riḍā, the witness of a teacher of music was not accepted by the court, as being illegal. Yet a way out of the difficulty could be found by applying the principle of independent investigation (*ijtihād*). The same difficulty was encountered when it was proposed to erect a statue to Kamāl Pasha in Angora. Kamāl Pasha solved the difficulty by declaring that the making of statues is not forbidden to-day as it was in the days when Muslims were just out of idolatry, and that it is necessary for

¹ Ibid., iv. 293; xxii. 185.

² Ibid., iv. 859, and frequently.

³ *Al-khilāfah aw al-imāmah al-'uẓmah*, Cairo, 1341/1922, pp. 81, 82.

the Turks to practise this art, for it is one of the arts of civilization.¹

The task of adapting the laws of Islām to the needs of the present can only be done by scholars and men in authority who are thoroughly qualified to do so by their attainments in both the religious and secular sciences. In order, therefore, that a body of laws, suitable for Muslim nations in the present day, might be drawn up, it is necessary that a number of such competent men from different Muslim lands should confer together. They should compare the enactments of the four schools of canon law with the Qur'ān and the Sunnah, and draw up a book of laws, based, first of all, upon the principles of the Divine Law, but based also, in the second place, upon the principle of regard for the common weal and the requirements of the present time. The caliph would then put these laws into effect by giving instructions to the *qāḍīs* in all Muslim lands to proceed in accordance with them. If the caliph refuses to accept this responsibility, it is the duty of the 'Ulamā to see that he undertakes it. If they refuse, the people themselves must take steps to secure reform.² Furthermore, in order to secure officials who are competent to enforce such laws, all officials, including the caliph, should receive training in schools established for this purpose.³

The manner in which the foregoing principles would operate and some of the questions which would be raised in the process, received recent illustration (1928) in the discussion of a motion which was presented in the Egyptian Chamber of Deputies, providing for the abolishment of the religious foundations known as 'private' or 'family *wakfs*' (*al-awḳāf al-ahliyyah*), on the ground of mismanagement, among other reasons. Rashīd Riḍā admits mismanagement in many cases, and adds that many foundations provide for objects that are contrary to the true Islām, such as maintaining and decorating the tombs of saints. Yet the religious

¹ Muḥammad 'Abduh expressed a similar opinion regarding the use of pictures and statues. They are not forbidden so long as there is no danger of their being devoted to improper religious uses. *Tārīkh*, ii. 444 sqq. *Al-Manār* speaks to the same effect, iv. 56.

² *Al-Manār*, iv. 860, 866; *Koranauslegung*, pp. 334, 335.

³ *Ibid.*, xxvii. 142.

foundations themselves are a true Muslim institution, based on the text of the Divine Law and on consecutive Muslim practice since the first generation. They cannot be abrogated, therefore, by individual opinion, and are not to be abolished because of abuses. The important question raised by the incident is that of allowing the legislative body of the government, established by constitution, to have the right to pass legislation which will supersede that which is undoubtedly a part of the Divine Law. Rashīd Riḍā maintains that the fundamental law of the land should not grant this right to Parliament, so long as the law recognizes Islām as the official religion of the government. Other matters of legislation, however, that do not involve decisive texts or consecutive practice, are to be dealt with as the proofs indicate or common welfare requires.¹

Society for Propaganda and Guidance.

It is one of the fundamental principles of the 'Abduh movement that every Muslim should consider himself responsible, not only for strengthening the bonds of Islām among his fellow religionists and encouraging the performance of its duties and the fulfilment of its ethical requirements, but also for actively engaging in the spread of Islām among non-Muslims, inasmuch as it is a universal religion.² This principle, and, in fact, the entire attitude of the movement on both secular and religious matters, presupposes the general spread of education among the people. Rashīd Riḍā, in all his writings and public addresses, as did Muḥammad 'Abduh before him, urges Muslims to devote their means to that most excellent of all good works, namely, the founding of schools. The founding of schools, he says, is better than the founding of mosques, for the prayer of an ignorant man in a mosque is valueless, whereas, through the founding of schools, ignorance will be removed and thus both secular and religious works will

¹ Ibid., xxix. 75-7. The question has come up before, it is there further stated, in legislation concerning marriage and divorce. A proposal was also made in Parliament to abolish the office of Grand Mufti. *Al-Manār* repeats its suggestion that a commission of leading 'Ulamā study all such questions and report what the regulations of the true Islām are in regard to them.

² Cf. above, pp. 172, 173.

be correctly performed.¹ Elsewhere he remarks that the only way to the prosperity of a nation lies in the general extension of education.² The governmental system of education is criticized by *Al-Manār* on two accounts: first, it aims chiefly to provide training for civil service and government employ rather than a general education; and, second, it fails to provide adequate religious training, even where it is not hostile to religion. *Al-Manār* places particular emphasis upon the necessity of all schools providing instruction in the duties and doctrines of Islām.³

It was for the purpose of promoting the above-mentioned objectives and, at the same time, of counteracting the activities of Christian missions in Muslim lands that the 'Society of Propaganda and Guidance' (*Jam'īyyat al-da'wah wa al-irshād*) was formed. The idea of such a society first suggested itself to the mind of Rashīd Riḍā when he was a student in Tripoli. He used to frequent the bookshop of the American missionaries in that city, where he read the literature provided and engaged in argument, he informs us, and he used to wish that the Muslims had a society like theirs and schools like theirs. When he removed to Cairo, the idea took stronger hold upon him and he began, as early as 1900, to write on the subject of replying to Christian propaganda by similar undertakings on the part of Muslims. On the occasion of the Japanese 'Parliament of Religions', in 1906, he advocated sending to the Japanese a summons to embrace Islām. It was then that he set to work to found a society for purposes of propaganda, the first work of which should be the founding of a school for the preparation of missionaries. Although the project was received with general approval in Muslim lands, progress was delayed for a number of years by intervening events.⁴

¹ *Al-Manār*, vi. 152; *Koranauslegung*, p. 342.

² *Ibid.*, i. 46.

³ *Ibid.*, i. 56-74, for example, where a programme of studies is suggested. Cf. similar criticisms and suggestion by Muḥammad 'Abduh in 'Proposals for Education in Egypt', *Tārīkh*, ii. 364-81; also in *Al-Manār*, xxiii. 596.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, xiv. 42, 43. Muḥammad 'Abduh, as a result of his visit to the Capuchin monastery and school in Palermo, asked if it had ever occurred to Muslims to found a training-school that would be the centre of propaganda. *Tārīkh*, ii. 426. Later he began plans for a training-school.

Finally, in 1909, the project was revived, this time with the purpose of launching it in Turkey, in order to enjoy the advantages of the new constitution and to escape the opposition of the Nationalist Party of Egypt, led by Muḥammad Bey Farīd and Shaikh 'Abd al-'Azīz Shawīsh.¹ Rashīd Riḍā spent a whole year in Constantinople, working on behalf of the project among the educated men and the members of the Government. Government approval for the founding of the society and its school was finally secured, after considerable modification of the original plan, but the fall of the ministry at this critical juncture necessitated the renewal of negotiations. When permission was again secured, it was upon conditions which Rashīd Riḍā was unwilling to accept.² It was therefore decided to found the society and school in Cairo. In due time, the society was organized, with Maḥmūd Bey Sālīm as President and Rashīd Riḍā as Vice-President and Principal of the school. All Muslims, who made a substantial contribution to the funds of the society or paid a certain sum as annual dues, were eligible for membership.³ A very large contribution was made by one of the Arab merchant princes of Bombay.⁴ The formal opening of the school, which was situated on the island of Rodah at Cairo, took place on the eve of the birthday festival of the Prophet, and classes were begun the following day, 13 Rabi' al-Awwal, A.H. 1330 (March 3, 1912).⁵

The school, which is called, indifferently, 'The Institute, or The School, of Propaganda and Guidance' (*Dār al-da'wah wa al-irshād*, or *Madrasah*, &c.), is described as a college in which instruction is given in the subjects usually taught, with additional emphasis upon religious training,⁶ and its primary object is said to be: 'Improvement of the method of Islāmic teaching, together with religious training.'⁷ The

Al-Manār, viii. 895. But Rashīd Riḍā denies that he received the idea of his school from Muḥammad 'Abduh or that the latter ever mentioned founding a society and school for purposes of propaganda (xiv. 58).

¹ *Al-Manār*, xiv. 37, 42; xv. 925, 926. They charged secret designs for the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of an all-Arab empire under British protection.

² *Al-Manār*, xiv. 35-7, 43-6.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 116, 117.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁵ *Ibid.*, xv. 226, 227. Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 343, gives a year earlier.

⁶ *Ibid.*, xiv. 786.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 801.

organization of the school and its curriculum, together with the constitution of the society, are given in detail in the pages of *Al-Manār*.¹ Muslim young men, of the age of twenty to twenty-five years and the requisite scholastic standing, are received as pupils, preference being given to students from distant Muslim lands where the need of Muslims is greatest, as China, India, Malaysia, &c. Students have been enrolled from East Africa, North Africa, Turkey, Turkestan, India, Java, and Malaysia.² Tuition and board and lodging are free, and financial help is also provided for those who need it. Those who complete satisfactorily a three years' course of training are given the diploma of 'murshid', or 'guide', and are competent to preach or teach in schools of the society, among Muslims. Those who complete an additional three years qualify as 'dā'in', or 'summoner', that is, missionary to non-Muslims. All students are required to agree that they will go to whatever country they may be sent.³ The school was discontinued on the outbreak of the Great War, however, and has not, up to the present, been reopened.

The 'Manār' Commentary.

This is the name which is given to the *Commentary on the Qur'ān* which was begun by Muḥammad 'Abduh and continued, since his death, by Rashīd Riḍā. Since the material has first appeared in the columns of *Al-Manār* before separate publication, and its preparation has been due, to so large an extent, to the labours of the editor of *Al-Manār*, it is fitting that the title of the *Commentary* as a whole should celebrate the connexion.

In fact, the initiation of the work was due, in the first place, to the earnest representations of Rashīd Riḍā, according to his own account.⁴ When he first came to Cairo he urged Muḥammad 'Abduh to begin the preparation of a commentary on the whole Qur'ān in the spirit, and according to the method, of his interpretation of certain passages that had appeared in *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthkakah*. 'Abduh was at first not persuaded that another commentary was necessary or that

¹ *Al-Manār*, xiv. 785 sqq., 801 sqq., 114 sqq.

² *Ibid.*, xv. 928.

³ *Ibid.*, xiv. 786-8.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 650 sqq.

it would accomplish what was intended, even if it were necessary; but he finally yielded so far as to begin a series of lectures on the Qur'ān in the Azhar University. Rashīd Riḍā attended these lectures and took notes, which he afterwards revised and enlarged. The result was shown to Muḥammad 'Abduh who approved, or corrected as necessary. These lectures began to appear in *Al-Manār*, volume iii (A.D. 1900), as the commentary of Muḥammad 'Abduh; since the editor thought it proper, so long as 'Abduh had read what had been written, to ascribe them to him.

Publication of these lectures in separate form was begun during 'Abduh's lifetime. The commentary on 'Sūrat al-'Aṣr' (Sūrah ciii) first was printed, followed by the final section of the Qur'ān, Sūrahs lxxviii–cxiv, beginning with the words, 'Of what ask they of one another?' ('*amma yas'alūn*'), and the opening Sūrah, 'Al-Fātiḥah'.¹ Publication of the main body of the *Commentary* was begun with the second section (*juz'*) of the Qur'ān, since the comment on the first section was briefer and did not agree completely in method with later sections. Volumes ii to x were published during the years 1908 to 1931, in which the comment was carried as far as 'Sūrat al-Taubah' (ix. 91). The first section has now been revised to conform in method with later sections and appeared in November 1927, as volume i.²

After the death of Muḥammad 'Abduh, Rashīd Riḍā felt that he should continue the *Commentary* in a manner which would be that of his master, as closely as possible. Even during 'Abduh's lifetime, much of what was written had been directly Rashīd Riḍā's own, although it had all been attributed to 'Abduh. After the latter's death, Rashīd distinguishes between what he had preserved of 'Abduh's words and what is his own work. 'I believe, however', he says, 'that had he lived and read it, he would have approved all of it.' He has changed his method somewhat, also, to include a larger quotation from the correct Traditions which relate to each verse, attention to critical questions of grammar and philology, digressions on matters of particular interest or necessity

¹ For dates of publication, see Appendix on Bibliography.

² *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 641.

As for the traditional interpretations, some of them are necessary; for nothing will take precedence of a genuine tradition that is traced back to the Prophet through one of the Companions. Next to this is a genuine tradition from the scholars among the Companions, on subjects connected with the linguistic sense or the practice of their day. But genuine traditions of these two classes are few. Most of the traditional interpretations are traceable to narrators who were Jewish or Persian heretics, or converts from among the Jews and Christians. All of them consist of anecdotes of the apostles and their people, their books and their miracles, or the history of other individuals, like the Men of the Cave (Sūrah xviii), or places like 'Iram adorned with pillars' (Sūrah lxxxix. 6), &c.

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 641.

² The reference is probably to Shaikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī. See below, Chapter IX, under 'Apologetics'.

³ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 647.

These are all legends and forgeries which the narrators, and even some of the Companions, accepted in good faith. The opinion of Ibn Taimiyyah is quoted at length. He refused to accept any Jewish anecdotes, whether true or false in themselves, including those which emanated from Ka'b al-Aḥbār and Wahb ibn Munabbah, although the older commentators, says Rashīd Riḍā, were deceived by them in spite of their lies which have become apparent to us. The conclusion is, that none of the traditional interpretations are to be accepted unless supported as a genuine tradition reported by a Companion as from the Prophet.¹ The suggestion is made that such of these interpretations as may be beneficial be collected separately, like the books of traditions, and the validity of their authorities be made clear; from these choice could be made for use in commentaries, without reproducing the name of the authorities.²

Numerous illustrations have already been given of the manner in which Muḥammad 'Abduh's principles are, on all possible occasions, deduced from and illustrated by the Qur'ān, or more correctly, in many cases at least, read into the Qur'ān. The character of the book as Divine revelation, infallibly inspired in every particular, is always insisted upon. Even the order and arrangement of the words and the connexion of thought are held to be inspired. The older commentaries, as that of Al-Jalālain, which 'Abduh made the basis of his Qur'ān lectures,³ allowed that the necessity for the occurrence, at the end of a verse, of a word which would rhyme with adjacent verses, sometimes determined which of two practically synonymous words should precede and which should follow, as 'ra'ūf' and 'raḥīm'; but the '*Manār*' *Commentary* declares that the Qur'ān is no piece of poetry and is therefore not subject to requirements of rhyme, but each word is in the proper place to which God assigned it.⁴ In like manner, where former commentators found separate occasions of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) for separate portions and verses, and even parts of verses, the '*Manār*' *Commentary*

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 650.

² *Ibid.*, p. 648.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 655.

⁴ *Tafsīr*, ii. 11, 12 (the same in *Al-Manār*, vii. 91), on Sūrah ii. 136-8; *Koranauslegung*, pp. 345-7.

takes pains to point out the connexion of thought which binds the separate parts of each verse together, or binds verse to verse. Thus, on Sūrah ii. 216–18, where wine and games of chance, the giving of alms, and the care of orphans are mentioned in succession, it is pointed out that the first two matters deal with two different classes of people and their ways of spending money; it was appropriate, therefore, to mention after them a question about a class of persons that is most deserving of all classes to have money expended in their behalf, namely, orphans.¹

Formative Influences.

In concluding the survey of the principles and tendencies of the movement which has been discussed at length in the preceding chapters, the factors which have mainly exerted a formative influence upon the movement may be briefly noted. These factors, as has been shown by Goldziher in the work which has been frequently referred to,² are three in number: first, the ethico-religious conceptions of Al-Ghazzālī; second, the ultra-conservative tendency of those two iconoclasts of the thirteenth century A.D., Ibn Taimiyyah and his pupil, Ibn al-Ḳayyim al-Jawziyyah; and third, the necessity of adaptation to the demands of modern progress.

The part which the teachings of Al-Ghazzālī (A.D. 1059–1111) have played in determining one of the most significant characteristics of this movement furnishes a further striking illustration of the strangely vitalizing influence which those teachings have continued to exert in Islām. All three of the individuals who are chiefly responsible for this movement were deeply affected by Al-Ghazzālī's writings: Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, who, despite the brevity of his works which remain to us, gives evidence of the importance which he attached to those writings; Muḥammad 'Abduh, in whose pages the influence is unmistakable; and Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, who acknowledges him as the first great teacher of his early days. The influence of Al-Ghazzālī is discernible, not simply in direct appeal to his writings, which is, indeed, frequent; but, more considerably, in the reproduction of his most

¹ *Tafsīr*, ii. 350.

² *Koranauslegung*, pp. 335–42.

characteristic religious ideas and in reminiscences, even, of his words and expressions; and, more particularly still, in the spirit which dominates the whole conception of the religious life as something inward and vital, an affair of the heart, with relation to which the outward forms are but secondary and contributory. Particular illustration of this may be found in what is said above of the teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh regarding faith, prayer, and the performance of other religious duties.¹ What is there evident may be taken as a characteristic indication of the spirit which the 'Abduh movement endeavours to introduce into the religious practices and beliefs of Muslims of to-day. Furthermore, in the emphasis placed upon the direct study and exegesis of the *Qur'ān* rather than the ponderous tomes of theology, in order that faith might be derived from its proper source,² and in the attempt to bring the dogmas of theology within the comprehension of the common people, it may be said that 'Abduh and his school are also influenced by Al-Ghazzālī.³

The second influence is that of Ibn Taimiyyah (d. A.D. 1328) and Ibn al-Kayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. A.D. 1355), who conducted a bitter fight against the 'bid'ah' and corruption of their own day, claimed for themselves the right of independent investigation (*ijtihād*), and went back to first sources and principles in everything. They bitterly opposed the *Ṣūfis* and condemned unsparingly the visitation of the tombs of prophets and saints. They were the revivers of the tradition of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, the strictest and most literally minded of the four great Imāms of canon law, and their tradition was, in turn, perpetuated by the Wahhābīs, the sect of puritan reformers that came to political supremacy in Arabia in the early years of the nineteenth century, and whose wheel of political fortunes has again come full circle in the recent successes of Ibn Sa'ūd. It will be apparent that the Egyptian reformers have derived inspiration for a number of their activities from these earlier reformers, and it is not entirely surprising that the editor of *Al-Manār* should have occasion to complain that, because of his opposition to certain

¹ Cf. above, pp. 168 sqq.

² Cf. above, p. 116, also p. 191.

³ Cf. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology*, pp. 238, 239.

prevailing practices, he is called 'either a Mu'tazilite or a Wahhābī'.¹ Both Muḥammad 'Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā derive the method of their 'fatwās', or legal opinions, from the *I'lām al-muwakkī'in* of Ibn al-Ḳayyim, because he bases his authority upon the text of the Ḳur'ān and the Sunnah;² and Ibn Taimiyyah is depended upon, because 'he was one of the best informed of Muslim scholars, if not the best, on the sources whence "bid'ah" arose, and most able in showing that they are contrary to the true Islām'.³ Copious extracts from the works of these two scholars are given in the pages of *Al-Manār*, and new editions of their works have been printed, some of them by the press of *Al-Manār* and all doubtless under its auspices. It is of advantage to the reformers, it may be pointed out, to be able to parry the objections of their orthodox opponents by showing that, through their affinities with the two earlier reformers, and through them, with Ḥanbalite teaching, they are in direct line with the strictest school of Muslim interpretation.

Of the influence of the demands of modern progress upon the character of the 'Abduh movement, it is unnecessary to speak at length. It is, in a sense, the *raison d'être* for the existence of the movement, for it is only as Islām is reformed to agree with modern conditions, it is believed, that its true character as a world religion will be apparent.

¹ *Al-Manār*, i. 425.² *Ibid.*, vi. 891.³ *Ibid.*, xxviii. 423, 424.

CHAPTER IX

THE 'MANĀR' PARTY

THE term 'the "Manār" Party' is here used as a designation to include those who have been influenced by the teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh and have identified themselves more or less openly with the movement which he inaugurated. Since *Al-Manār* has been the organ through which his views have been given their largest publicity and has formed a rallying point for those whose sympathies have been enlisted in the cause of reform, the designation may be applied with some fitness.¹ The word 'party', however, as applied to them should not be taken to indicate that his avowed followers have at any time constituted a considerable body, or that they have represented a well-defined organization or other such well-defined body. It is true that 'Abduh's teachings have exerted a wide influence in Egypt and elsewhere in the Muslim world, and have won the approval of many individuals, especially among the educated classes; indications of this have received mention in an earlier section. Many individuals who have been animated by his principles, to a greater or lesser degree, have identified themselves with literary, benevolent, religious, and even political organizations. Yet the fact remains, that those who have actively and openly joined in agitation for the reforms advocated by *Al-Manār*, the 'Moderate Party' as Rashīd Riḍā prefers to call them, have always been few in number; they remain to this day, he says, in the minority, 'a little group of the first reformers and a few of the later generation'.²

It is possible to collect from the *Biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh* or from the pages of *Al-Manār*, from references in various publications or from occasional articles in the press, the names of a considerable number of persons who were associated more or less closely with either Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī or with Muḥammad 'Abduh. Of some of these it is

¹ The term is suggested by Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, as on p. 326, and elsewhere. He also uses the expressions "Abduh Party", and "Abduh-Manār Party".

² *Al-Manār*, xxix (1928), 66.

known only that they were pupils of one or the other of the two masters, some few having been pupils of both ; but of the part which they played in advancing the reform movement, history is silent. Others are known to have been pupils or associates for a time but seem to have been influenced slightly by the reform principles or to have been turned aside later by more potent interests. Still others have been sincerely animated by the reform principles ; many of these latter were men of prominence in public life, who supported the cause of reform when it was not always popular to do so. To compile a list of the names that are known, with the biographical facts that are available concerning the few, may present little of interest to those not familiar with Egyptian developments during the last half century ; but it has this much of value, at least, that it represents a fair cross-section of the educated classes as affected by the 'Abduh movement, and affords some indication of the extent to which the various classes have been influenced. For the individuals that may be named represent larger groups, the number of which it is impossible to conjecture. Moreover, it should not be forgotten, all of these were of varying shades of thought and sympathies, as *Al-Manār* points out ; some of the party inclined towards the orthodox and Conservative side, some towards the Liberal, Europeanizing group.¹ It will be apparent, however, from the list of names which can be assembled, that the call of Muḥammad 'Abduh received a response from many quarters and affected the life of the country in many directions.

The Azhar Group.

It is a fact to be noted, first of all, that the Azhar or 'Shaikh' class was not so much attracted by 'Abduh's principles as was the 'Effendi' or Europeanized section of the population. The greater number of his actual followers were drawn from the higher ranks of the legal profession, from teachers in the higher Government schools and from the heads of Government departments.² Some of these would be Azhar-trained but the majority belonged to the classes which

¹ *Al-Manār*, xi. 205.

² *Tārīkh*, i. 137, 757.

had received some Western education. This may seem surprising at first, in view of the unsparing efforts which 'Abduh devoted to the reform of the Azhar and the teaching which he himself did and the lectures which he delivered within its precincts. It is less surprising when the essentially conservative character of this class is recalled and the strong influence which the Azhar has always exerted in the direction of maintaining the traditions of the past unbroken. It is unnecessary to repeat here what has been said in an earlier section regarding the opposition which 'Abduh encountered on the part of this conservative element of the Azhar. Yet notwithstanding this general unyielding attitude, a considerable number of the students were attracted to his lectures and not a few became his disciples. A few, like 'Abduh himself, had been pupils of Jamāl al-Dīn and continued to support the reform movement when 'Abduh became its leader.

Prominent among the Azhar men who were close friends and associates of 'Abduh was Shaikh Aḥmad Abu Khaṭwah (d. 1906). He was a judge in the Sharī'ah courts and a teacher in the Azhar and had been a pupil of Jamāl al-Dīn. He supported 'Abduh in his reforms in the Azhar and in the courts.¹ He was also one of the representatives of the four schools of canon law who published a declaration in support of the best known of 'Abduh's 'fatwās' which called forth much opposition, the so-called 'Transvaal Fatwā'.²

Shaikh 'Abd al-Karīm Salmān and Shaikh Sayyid Wafā, both of whom had been pupils of Jamāl al-Dīn and afterwards became pupils of 'Abduh, were associated with the latter in the editorship of the *Journal Officiel*.³ In the reckoning which followed the collapse of the 'Arābī movement, it seems that 'Abd al-Karīm, although he had been one of the closest friends of 'Abduh, sought to clear himself of the imputation of belonging to his party.⁴ At another time he became the

¹ *Al-Manār*, xi. 227; for his Memorial address, reviewing 'Abduh's work in the Azhar and in the courts, see *Tārīkh*, iii. 250 sqq.; i. 618, 619.

² *Tārīkh*, i. 674.

³ *Al-Manār*, viii. 406. See above, p. 46.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, i. 278. See on pp. 276-80 a letter from Sa'ad Zaghlūl to 'Abduh who was then in exile in Bairūt. The letter seeks to explain the expressions that had been used by 'Abd al-Karīm and to minimize the unfavourable impression. He says that he is much in his company. He also refers to a certain Shaikh Muḥammad Khalil as among 'Abduh's friends. Mr. Wilfred

leader of a clique of 'Abduh's followers who intrigued to remove Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā from the favoured position which he enjoyed as 'Abduh's chief disciple and closest associate.¹ Yet after each of these temporary lapses, he seems to have returned to his allegiance, for during the days of the Azhar reforms he rendered much support and encouragement to 'Abduh.

Shaikh Ḥassūnah al-Nawāwī (1840-1925) was another close friend and supporter. As Rector of the Azhar from 1895 to 1899 and, for the last two years of this period, Grand Mufti also, he collaborated with 'Abduh in the introduction of such reforms as could be accomplished.² Shaikh Muḥammad Bakhīt, a successor of 'Abduh in the office of Grand Mufti and at present one of the leading 'Ulamā of Egypt, was a fellow student with 'Abduh in the Azhar. They attended together the lectures of Shaikh Ḥasan al-Ṭawīl and Jamāl al-Dīn.³ He seems, however, to have taken little part in reform activities, and, strictly speaking, should probably not be considered a member of the 'Abduh party. In 1926 he published a book in reply to the work of 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāzīk on the Islāmic Caliphate. Against the modernizing positions of this work he maintained the orthodox Muslim arguments on behalf of the Caliphate.⁴ Another pupil of Jamāl al-Dīn and 'Abduh, who later became Grand Mufti, is Shaikh 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ḳarā'ah. 'Abduh once called him 'the youngest of his brethren and the oldest of his sons';⁵ but if he has identified himself with the cause of reform it has not been in any prominent way. Another who is commonly recognized by the press of to-day as 'the oldest of the pupils of Muḥammad 'Abduh' is Shaikh Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, recently Rector of the Azhar (1928-30).

Blunt mentions the same shaikh, who was his teacher of Arabic, as among 'Abduh's pupils. *Secret History of Egypt*, p. 75.

¹ *Tārīkh*, i. 1017.

² See above, pp. 72, 73, 78.

³ Address at Memorial Gathering, July 11, 1922, at which he presided as Chairman of the Organizing Committee. Cf. *Al-Manār*, xxiii. 513 sqq., also *Printed Report (Al-ihitafāl bi-ihyā dhikrā al-ustādh al-imām)*, p. 6.

⁴ *Ḥaqīkat al-Islām wa uṣūl al-ḥukm* ('The Truth about Islām and the Fundamentals of Authority'), Salafiyyah Press, Cairo, 1344/1926, pp. 457 On 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāzīk, see below, Chapter X.

⁵ *Report of Memorial Gathering*, p. 42.

Under his leadership an extensive reorganization of the Azhar was undertaken with a view to its greater adaptation to modern conditions in Egypt. A plan of reorganization was promulgated in 1930 in what is known as 'Law No. 49';¹ but because of the opposition which the proposed reforms encountered, Shaikh Muṣṭafā resigned from the rectorship. In 1929, during his period in office, a proposal was made in the daily press, which at once met with general approval, that 'Abduh's house in 'Ain Shams be preserved as a permanent memorial, or some other appropriate form of national recognition be provided; and it was generally agreed that Shaikh Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī was the most suitable person to take the matter in hand, both because of his position and of his former relation to 'Abduh.² Since his resignation from the rectorship of the Azhar, however, nothing further has been heard of the matter. Shaikh Muṣṭafā was formerly Supreme Shari'ah Judge for the Sudan, having been appointed to the office on the recommendation of 'Abduh. A number of others of 'Abduh's disciples have served in the Sudan as judges and as teachers in Gordon Memorial College.³

Shaikh Al-Sayyid 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-Damardāsh Pasha (1853-1930), hereditary head of the Damardāshī Ṣūfī order, was also a disciple and a member of the group that was most intimate with 'Abduh.⁴ In politics, he was a member of the People's party (Ḥizb al-Ummah)⁵ and served as a member of the Legislative Council and, later, of the revised Assembly. When he succeeded to the headship of the Damardāshī Order in 1877, he introduced many changes for the better into the administration of the Order; and he was one of the first in Egypt to advocate reforms in the administration of the Religious Endowments (*Wakf*) of the country. A short time before his death, he donated a large sum of money for the erection and endowment of a hospital, now known by his name, in Cairo; and on the occasion of the 'Abduh Memorial Gathering in 1922, he offered to endow a chair in the Egyptian

¹ *Al-Hilāl*, November 1931, pp. 60 sqq.

² See *Al-Ahrām*, January 12, 1929; *Al-Siyāsah*, February 7, 8, 1929, &c.

³ *Tārīkh*, i. 876.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2; biographical account in *Al-Ahrām*, February 6, 1930, for above items.

⁵ See below, p. 222.

University in memory of Muḥammad 'Abduh, although nothing has come of the proposal up to the present.¹

Another name that belongs in the list of those who attended 'Abduh's lectures is that of Shaikh 'Abd al-'Azīz Shāwīsh (d. 1929),² although his turbulent career of political agitation carried on the tradition of Jamāl al-Dīn rather than that of 'Abduh. The name of Shaikh 'Alī Surūr Al-Zankalūnī, one of the leading 'Ulamā of the Azhar to-day, should also be included among those who were friends of 'Abduh and associated with him to some extent.³

Professional and Literary Group.

Among the group that identified themselves with 'Abduh were a number who had received a part or all of their training in the Azhar, but whose subsequent careers led them beyond the range of interests and activities common to the Azhar circle. One of these was Ibrāhīm Bey al-Laḡānī (d. 1906), a well-known lawyer and literary man, who was one of the leading spirits of the earlier revival that centred about Jamāl and one of its ablest writers and orators. Of Jamāl's pupils he ranked second only to Muḥammad 'Abduh, according to the estimate of Rashīd Riḡā, in correctness of style and precision of phrase. Following the 'Arābī Rebellion, he was banished from Egypt under the same sentence as Muḥammad 'Abduh and went with him to Bairūt, where he remained until permitted to return to Egypt. During his later years he was prevented by illness from taking an active part in affairs, and so did not reach the prominence which otherwise he might have attained.⁴ Another is Ibrāhīm Bey al-Hilbāwī, doyen of the legal profession to-day in Egypt and a distinguished orator. Because of the ability which he had shown as a pupil of Jamāl, he was one of those chosen by 'Abduh to assist him in the editorship of the *Journal Officiel*, of which Sa'ad Zaghlūl, then also a young Azhar shaikh, was likewise an associate editor. Later he participated actively in the work

¹ *Kashkūl*, March 15, 1929; the article recalls that shortly after the death of 'Abduh a committee of his friends undertook to prepare a memorial but nothing ever came of it.

² *Tārīkh*, i. 773; see above, p. 184.

³ *Report of Memorial Gathering*, p. 39.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, i. 137, 234, &c.; *Al-Mānār*, xi. 227; xxviii. 710.

of the Muslim Benevolent Society.¹ He was a friend of Kāsim Bey Amīn and when the latter, through his books, became known as the champion of women's rights, al-Hilbāwī was one of the few who espoused with him the unpopular cause; and he has continued the fight until he has seen a great change in public opinion on this subject take place.²

A number of others of the earliest disciples may be conveniently grouped as persons in Government office or positions of public trust. Among these was Ibrāhīm Bey al-Muwailihī (1846–1906), who was a pupil of Jamāl and aided him in the publication of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*.³ He was also a friend of 'Abduh, but on at least one occasion, namely, in the matter of the 'Transvaal Fatwā', he wrote bitterly against him, having been one of the writers retained for this purpose by the Khedive 'Abbās II and his sympathizers of the orthodox party.⁴ He was a member of a wealthy family, but lost his fortune through speculation. He came into favour with the Khedive Isma'il Pasha, served in various capacities in the Government, and, when the Khedive was deposed, followed him to Italy as his private secretary. Later he spent some years in Constantinople where he enjoyed the favour of the Sultan. During all this time he contributed frequently to the newspapers and made frequent attempts to found newspapers of his own, with varying success. About 1868 he founded a society, called 'Al-Ma'ārif', to promote the circulation of works in classical Arabic, and founded also a printing press, under the same name, for the issue of such works. Among the works published was the Arabic dictionary, *Taj al-'Arūs*. Among the students of Jamāl, says Rashid Ridā, he stood alone as newspaper contributor and as a master of invective.⁵ His book, *Ma Hunālik*, which embodies the results of his observations during his sojourn in Constantinople, has been described as 'the best that has been

¹ *Tārīkh*, i. 138, 742, 748; *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 710; see above, pp. 46, 83.

² *Al-Hilāl*, November 1931. In this, the '40th Anniversary Number', prominent men review the developments of forty years in Egypt, from the viewpoints with which their names have become particularly associated. Al-Hilbāwī writes on 'Woman'.

³ Sarkis, *Al-Maṭbū'āt*, cols. 1819–20; a fuller biographical account is found in *Mashāhīr*, ii. 101–5.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, i. 668.

⁵ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 710.

written on the secrets of Yildiz during the régime of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd'.¹

To this group belongs also Ḥasan Pasha 'Āşim, who served as Grand Chamberlain to the Khedive 'Abbās II and later as Chief of the Khedivial Cabinet.² He was one of the closest friends and supporters of 'Abduh, aiding him effectively in the Muslim Benevolent Society, of which he was one of the organizers and most active officials, and in his efforts for a literary revival, and working with him for the reform of the Shari'ah Court.³ His death followed soon after that of 'Abduh.

Ḥifnī Bey Nāşif (1856–1919) was also a prominent member of the group, having studied with both Jamāl and 'Abduh.⁴ In speaking of the effect of these lectures upon himself and others of the group of students, he said: 'We felt in our souls that any one of us was capable of reforming a province or a kingdom.'⁵ He was secretary of the delegation of Egyptian scholars who attended the Oriental Congress in Vienna in 1886, and presented a paper before the Congress. He served in a number of important positions, among them Chief Inspector in the Ministry of Education and Judge in the Native Tribunals. He was also teacher of Rhetoric in the School of Law, and lecturer in Arabic Literature in the newly founded Egyptian University (1909–10). He was the author of a number of books on grammar, rhetoric, and composition which have been used as text-books in the Egyptian schools. His lectures in the Egyptian University on 'The History of Arabic Literature' have also been published.⁶ He was thus one of the forerunners of the modern literary revival. It is interesting to note that the Egyptian poetess and advocate of women's rights who wrote under the pen name of 'Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah' was his daughter.⁷

¹ Sarkis, op. cit.

² *Tārīkh*, i. 497, 602. From the latter position he was retired on pension in 1904 by the Khedive because of his support of 'Abduh in a matter of administration of the Waḳfs in which the Khedive was personally interested.

³ *Al-Manār*, xi. 227; see above, pp. 83 sqq.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, i. 135, 137.

⁵ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 709, 710.

⁶ *Mu'jam al-Maḥbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah wa al-Mu'arrabah* ('Biog. Dict. of Arabic and Translated Works—up to 1919'), by Yūsuf Iliyān Sarkis, cols. 782, 783.

⁷ See below, p. 235.

Aḥmad Fathī Zaghlūl Pasha (1863–1914) was another of the early pupils of 'Abduh and one of the inner circle of his disciples,¹ who contributed to the literary revival, besides participating in various reform activities. He was a member of the first Educational Mission sent by the Department of Education to Europe, where he studied law. After his return, he rose in his profession to become President of the Native Tribunals and finally Assistant Minister of Justice. The influence which he exerted through his writings was considerable, particularly through his numerous translations from European languages into Arabic. His original works consist of treatises on law and a collection of articles on questions of the day which first appeared in the daily press.² Among his translations from English were *The Secret of the Advancement of the Anglo-Saxons*³ and Bentham's *Principles of Legislation*. His translations from French include works by Count di Castri, Desmoulins, and le Bon.⁴ The works translated were those which, in the opinion of the translator, were capable of application to conditions in Egypt or were needed as an incentive to reform; and an introduction to each translation pointed the application. Thus in his introduction to di Castri's work, translated under the title *Al-Islām, khawāṭir wa sawānīḥ* ('Islām: Ideas and Impressions') he contrasts the former glory of Islām with its present decadent state and, by way of emphasizing the responsibility of Muslims themselves for this state, quotes the opinion of *Al-Manār*, the first number of which had appeared shortly before this time. In the opinion of Rashīd Riḍā, the editor of *Al-Manār*, it was this public approval from the pen of Fathī Pasha which secured a favourable reception for his journal, particularly among members of the legal profession, such as otherwise it might not have had.⁵

¹ *Tārīkh*, i. 775, 996; *Al-Manār*, xi. 528 sqq., esp. 532.

² Published under the title *Al āthār al-Faṭḥiyyah*. Cf. Sarkis, *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt*, cols. 1435–7.

³ *Al-Manār*, ii. 465.

⁴ Sarkis, 1435–7; *Al-Manār*, ii. 465; cf. Gibb, *BSOS*, vol. iv, part iv, p. 759. Of his influence Gibb remarks: 'Of the many translators of this period. the one whose work was most effective in opening up new vistas to the Arabic world was Fathī Pasha Zaghlūl.'

⁵ *Tārīkh*, i. 1006.

There are a number of other men, prominent in 'Abduh's time or who later became prominent, whose names should be included in any account of his pupils that is to be thought of as even comparatively complete, although these names do not, of course, exhaust the list. The following names are given, in spite of the fact that little information is available concerning their contribution to the movement as a whole. 'Alī Bey Fakhrī (d. 1906) worked for the improvement of the judges and courts of the Native Tribunals;¹ Muḥammad Bey Rāsim, was the close friend at whose house in Alexandria, Muḥammad 'Abduh died;² Ḥamūdah Bey 'Abduh was the brother of Muḥammad 'Abduh, who studied under him during the sojourn in Bairūt;³ Maḥmūd Bey Sālim was President of the 'Society of Propaganda and Guidance';⁴ Muḥammad Pasha Ṣāliḥ attended 'Abduh's lectures in the Azhar and Dār al-'Ulūm;⁵ Ismā'il Pasha Ṣabri, Rafīḳ Bey al-'Iḏam, Shaikh Aḥmad Ibrāhīm, Shaikh Ḥasan Manṣūr, attended his special lectures on problems of philosophy, and the two last-named attended also his lectures in Dār al-'Ulūm.⁶ The Lebanon prince, the Amīr Shakīb Arslān, who is a frequent contributor to the press on topics connected with questions of general Islāmic welfare, was a pupil during 'Abduh's stay in Bairūt and has been a life-long disciple;⁷ and the well-known Egyptian scholar and man of letters, Aḥmad Pasha Taimūr, was, as a young man, first an interested pupil and then an enthusiastic disciple. He attended 'Abduh's lectures when the latter was teaching in Dār al-'Ulūm and was so attracted that he took advantage also of all of 'Abduh's classes in the Azhar, profiting particularly by

¹ *Al-Manār*, xi. 227.

² See above, p. 91.

³ See above, p. 64.

⁴ *Koranauslegung*, p. 343; *Al-Manār*, xiv. 116, 117; see xiv. 517 sqq. for art. by Maḥmūd Sālim on 'Qur'an Interpretation and the Modern Sciences'. See above, p. 195.

⁵ *Tārīkh*, i. 756, 778.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 775; for names of a number of pupils in Dār al-'Ulūm, see *ibid.*, p. 773.

⁷ In *Tārīkh*, i. 399-412, is an account by himself of his relations with 'Abduh. He mentions the fact that his first-published collection of poems entitled *Al-Bākūrah*, was, at 'Abduh's suggestion, dedicated to 'Abdallah Pasha Fikrī (1834-90), Egyptian Minister of Education and friend of 'Abduh. See also in *Kawkab al-Sharḳ*, February 19, 1932, in his review of *Tārīkh*, i, a reference to his book *Ḥadīr al-'Ālam al-Islāmī*, in which he gives an account of Jamāl al-Dīn.

his lectures on rhetoric, based on the two books of Al-Jurjāni;¹ and he attended also the private lectures on philosophy. He became so attached to 'Abduh and so captivated by his teaching that he purchased a house at 'Ain Shams, next door to that of 'Abduh, that he might live near him and thus have greater opportunity to profit by his companionship.²

Another well-known figure in the Egyptian world of letters, one of the leaders in the modern literary revival, who, as a student in the Azhar passed through 'Abduh's classes in rhetoric and was greatly influenced by his principles was al-Sayyid Muṣṭafā Luṭfī al-Manfalutī (1876–1924).³ Distinguished both as poet and essayist, he is one of the most widely read of modern Egyptian writers, the collection of his essays entitled *Al-Nazarāt* being especially well known, and he has exerted a formative influence upon the modern type of Egyptian literature. The results of his contact with 'Abduh are seen in his attacks upon abuses which have crept into Islām and demands for reform, in the spirit of much that is to be found in the pages of the 'Abduh literature; and he has given expression, in both prose and verse, to his love and respect for his master.⁴ On the other hand, his conservative tendencies appear in his attack on Kāsim Amīn's *Emancipation of Woman*,⁵ and in his criticism of modern methods of Kūr'ān interpretation, even when they were employed by no less a person than 'Abduh.⁶

Muḥammad Ḥāfiẓ Bey Ibrāhīm (1873–1932), commonly known as the 'Poet of the Nile', and also as the 'Social Poet' because of the attention which social problems receive in his works and particularly for the sympathy which he has shown for the poor and down-trodden, was likewise a pupil of 'Abduh and an intimate disciple.⁷ Born of poor parents in Cairo and

¹ *Tārīkh*, i. 757, 774. See above, p. 85.

² *Ibid.*, p. 774.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 757. Others who are mentioned as pupils of 'Abduh in this subject are 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Barḳūkī, Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq, 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq, Taha al-Bishrī, 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Bishrī.

⁴ Cf. ode on 'Abduh's return from Constantinople in 1901, *Tārīkh*, i. 863. Cf. also *Al-Nazarāt*, iii. 68.

⁵ *Al-Nazarāt*, i. 212; ii. 62 sqq.

⁶ *Ibid.*, i. 213. For account of works, cf. Sarkis, *Maḥbū'āt*, cols. 1805–6; for critical estimate, cf. Gibb, *BSOS*, vol. v, part ii, pp. 316 sqq.

⁷ *Tārīkh*, i. 775, 1042.

reared in indigent circumstances, he knew by experience those conditions which he pictures in sympathetic terms in his writings. After passing through the primary schools, he was received as a student in the War College. On the completion of his period of training, he was appointed as an officer in the Egyptian forces in the Sudan, where he served for a number of years. Returning to Egypt, he left the army and attached himself to 'Abduh, with whom he had come into contact through the medium of a congratulatory poem which he had dedicated to him on the occasion of the latter's appointment as Muftī (1899).¹ He thereafter accompanied 'Abduh on a number of his journeys to the provinces for philanthropic or reform purposes,² and became so intimate a follower that the envy of others was aroused;³ in his own words: 'I have been one of the most devoted of his pupils, hovering about his house and hanging on to his words'.⁴ It was during this period that some of his sincerest and best poetry was written.⁵ In 1911 he was appointed a librarian in the Egyptian Royal Library, from which he was retired on pension in the early part of 1932.

It is in his book, *Layālī Saṭīḥ*, that his reform opinions are most clearly stated. The book, written for the most part in prose, with occasional bits of verse, purports to be conversations which the writer and various other 'sons of the Nile', students, &c., hold with one another and with 'Saṭīḥ', a sort of shadowy hermit philosopher who is only heard giving his opinions but is never seen in person. The talk turns on the condition of Egyptian society which is freely criticized. Thus, the happiest persons in Egypt are, ironically, said to be the 'shaikhs' of the Ṣūfī orders, who are respected and obeyed in exaggerated form while living, and, when they are dead, some one builds a tomb over them and 'then the people seek

¹ *Tārīkh*, i. 604.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 807, 1042.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 957, 1017.

⁴ *Layālī Saṭīḥ*, p. 120 (Press of Maḥammad Maṭar, Cairo, no date); Sarkis, *Maṭbū'āt*, col. 736, gives date of publication of the book as 1324/1906.

⁵ Cf. biographical account and review of his poetry in *Al-Siyāsah*, March 19, 20, 1929, by 'Isā Maḥmūd Nāṣir. For ode recited at memorial service after death of 'Abduh, cf. *Tārīkh*, iii. 236, 237. For ode recited at Memorial Gathering, 1922, cf. *Printed Report*, pp. 33-5, also *Al-Manār*, xxiii. 513 sqq.

blessing by means of their wasting bones' (p. 24). The extent to which the Egyptian ideal of education centres about service in the Government is criticized in these words: 'The Egyptian worships Government service and devotes his attention to it and his education is founded on it. If he fails to secure service in the Government he loses all hope and his energy in work and effort declines, and he never ceases for the rest of his life to look forward to entering it.' The advice, therefore, is to cease competing for these offices and turn to other lines of work, 'that necessity may create a new feeling and that the new generation may be sensible that they are being educated for themselves and their country and not for Government service' (p. 17). It is for this reason, particularly, namely, that a new type of education may be fostered, that a national university is needed; the pupils of 'Abduh are, therefore, blameworthy 'because they know that this nation cannot have a real life without a university', and yet they are not persevering in their efforts to secure it (pp. 124-6). The newspapers are criticized for the 'anarchy' which prevails among them in the name of 'liberty', for their failure to utilize their opportunity to educate and uplift the people and for their high-flown language (pp. 34-8). It was through the influence of Jamāl and his pupils that 'taklīd' was brought to an end and 'God through them revived the Arabic language and brought to life the bones of composition'. For, previously, 'every one had been paying religious homage to the linguistic form but regarded the meaning with infidel unconcern'; but through the 'light of guidance' which dawned with the coming of Jamāl they were delivered from the 'darkness of the Middle Ages' (p. 52). Jamāl left the world as Socrates did, without leaving any books behind him, and had it not been for Muḥammad 'Abduh, he would not have become known, just as Socrates would have remained unknown without Plato (p. 53). The secret of the advancement of western nations is to be found in the ease with which writers are able to impart their influence to the common people, because they write in the language which is also spoken; and thus the meaning, even of poetry, comes home to them and the very spirit of the writer becomes a part of them, even though they

be unaware of it. The case is very different in Egypt, however, where the spoken language differs from the written, and the weakness of the one imparts itself to the other (pp. 56 sqq.). Thus various aspects of Egyptian life are reviewed and their defects laid bare.

Hāfiẓ tried his hand also at translation. He attempted a versification of parts of *Macbeth* in Arabic, with indifferent success. He was greatly attracted by Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* and translated it into Arabic,¹ and translated also other French works. He wrote much poetry on political subjects, although he himself took no part in politics; he is said to have written something about every important event of contemporary Egyptian history.² In one of his poems he expresses impatience with the conditions imposed upon the poet by the classical form of the ode, referring to them as 'bonds with which the advocates of the impossible have bound us'. 'Let us cast off from us these muzzles,' he continues, 'and let us inhale the breezes of the North', i.e. Europe. Nevertheless, so far as the evidence of his own poetry goes, he was unable to achieve any decided revolt against traditional forms, however willing his modernizing spirit may have been;³ yet he represents the new attitude toward letters as well as toward the religious and social aspects of Egyptian life.

The above-named individuals indicate, vaguely in some cases, more clearly in others, that the ferment of reform generated by 'Abduh's influence was at work in various directions. Most noticeable, perhaps, is the stimulus which it created in the direction of writing and oratory. The modern literary revival, it is true, did not reach full development until after the Great War; yet the 'Abduh movement greatly accelerated the development of factors already at work and contributed powerfully to the revival, not simply by providing from its own ranks writers and scholars of ability, but more especially, by creating a congenial atmosphere in which a new era of writing could develop. By his efforts to free the mind of Egypt from the fetters of tradition and to reconcile

¹ See above, p. 86.

² Art. *Al-Siyāṣah*, March 19, 1929.

³ Ibid.

the religion and culture of Islām with the attainments of modern civilization, 'Abduh made it possible for the Arabic literature of to-day to become modernized without breaking entirely with its Islāmic past, and in so doing he has placed the present generation of Muslim writers deeply in his debt. It is worthy of remark, also, that with the passing of time, the cause of religious reform, which was most fundamental with 'Abduh, has been overshadowed by developments in certain other directions. It is now necessary to turn to the consideration of some of the most marked developments and the individuals most prominently associated with them.

Political Development.

It will be recalled that political revolution was one of the main tenets of Jamāl al-Dīn's teaching, and that he approved of the method of political assassinations, if necessary for the accomplishment of his objectives. He and his party, among them Muḥammad 'Abduh, planned for the assassination of the Khedive Ismā'il Pasha, and even after they had desisted from that plan, worked for his deposition.¹ They believed that their hopes for a representative assembly, and other reforms which would result from it, could only be secured through the accession of Tawfiq Pasha. Muḥammad 'Abduh, in his *History of the 'Arābī Rebellion*, says *Al-Manār*, tells of how a deputation, among whom was Jamāl, waited upon the French Commissioner and set forth the aims of the party of reform, including the connexion of these aims with the accession of Tawfiq Pasha. Word of what had passed got abroad, it was taken up by the newspapers, and the name 'Nationalist party' (*Al-ḥizb al-waṭanī*) was then, for the first time, applied to a party in Egypt, namely, to the party of Jamāl.² Muḥammad 'Abduh, although less extreme in his views than Jamāl, accommodated himself to the more ardent nature of his master, both during his days in Egypt and the later period of secret agitation. But as a result of his experiences during this time, he came to entertain an extreme distrust of participation in politics. At the same time, says Rashīd Riḍā,

¹ *Al-Manār*, xi (1908-9), 98. Cf., also, biography of Jamāl, above.

² *Ibid.*, p. 199.

his training of his pupils included something of politics, because he believed that a man could not be perfect without some knowledge of a matter with which the independence and freedom of his country was so closely connected; and he inculcated a love of country, and taught the necessity of securing a united public opinion concerning matters that are of advantage to the country, while, at the same time, religion is given its due place.¹ The influence of these two men, the one extreme, the other moderate, can be seen in the succeeding political history of Egypt.

During the closing years of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth, there was a recrudescence in Egypt of Nationalist feeling which had been effectively suppressed, for the time being, by the failure of the Nationalist movement led by 'Arābī Pasha. This new phase in the development of Egyptian nationalism has not inaptly been called the 'journalistic phase',² inasmuch as nationalist sentiment found chief expression during this period in violent anti-British agitation and vituperative leading articles in the French and Arabic journals. Extremist opinion was led and ardently fostered by the young leader of the revived Nationalist Party, Muṣṭafā Kāmil Pasha (1874–1908). His immediate hopes for Egyptian independence were built upon intervention on the part of some European country, especially France, to bring about the termination of the British Occupation of Egypt. To this end he was tireless in his visits to the capitals of Europe and in his secret agitation. In all of these efforts he was supported by the Khedive 'Abbās II and by the Khedive's money.³ When he found that he could not depend upon European intervention, he turned towards Turkey, hoping much from the aggrandizement of the Ottoman Caliphate and the strengthening of Pan-Islāmic connexions. But Turkey also failed him. In the meantime (January 2, 1900), he had founded the newspaper *Al-Liwā*, through the medium of which, together with that of his oratory, he endeavoured to arouse public sentiment against the English

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 588.

² *Egypt*, George Young, New York, 1927, pp. 179, 180.

³ *Tārīkh*, i. 593.

and in favour of independence. In this endeavour he was eminently successful, thanks to his ardent enthusiasm, his fervid style and his dramatic appeals to the emotions.

His intense Anglophobe sentiments were partly due to French training and French influence, particularly to his association with Deloncle, who spent some months during the year 1895 in Egypt, Madame Juliet Adam, and others.¹ But there was also a link with the influence of Jamāl al-Dīn, aside from the fact that the Nationalist Party, which he founded in 1908, considered itself the direct successor and heir of the old Nationalist Party of Jamāl, which accounts in part for his fiery nationalism. This contact with Jamāl did not come about through 'Abduh, as might have been expected; for, in spite of friendly intercourse and overtures from Muṣṭafā with a view to his joining 'Abduh in work for Egypt and Islām, no alliance resulted, because of the lack of congeniality of aim and method between the two. And the men of 'Abduh's party, on their part, were suspicious of the sincerity of Muṣṭafā's motives, since they considered that he had been bought over by the Khedive.² The link with Jamāl was supplied through another who had been a friend and pupil of Jamāl, al-Sayyid 'Abd Allāh al-Nadīm (1845-96).

'Abd Allāh al-Nadīm was that one of Jamāl's pupils, according to Rashīd Riḍā, who excelled in incendiary oratory, which he practised with much success during the 'Arābī Rebellion. 'Such speeches', says the authority referred to, 'were suited to no one else as to him, and he was suited for nothing else as for that; for he was a wheedler, and given to exaggeration—and nothing excites the crowd like exaggeration.'³ He escaped apprehension, however, with the other leaders of the Rebellion and succeeded in eluding capture until 1891, although a reward had been offered for information concerning him. In the latter year he was captured, but was pardoned on condition that he would leave Egypt. He went, therefore, to Jaffa in Palestine where he remained about a

¹ For biographical details, cf. *Mashāhīr*, i. 289-301; Haikal, *Tarājim Miṣriyyah wa Gharbiyyah*, Cairo, 1929, pp. 140-62; for connexion with the French, see also *Truth about Egypt*, pp. 28 sqq.; Young, *Egypt*, p. 181; for connexion with the Khedive and Muḥammad 'Abduh, *Tārikh*, i. 593.

² *Tārikh*, i. 593.

³ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 710.

year, returning to Egypt when 'Abbās II became Khedive. He then founded a periodical which he named *Al-ustādh* ('The Instructor'), which was somewhat on the order of *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, to quote again the opinion of Rashīd Riḍā. This venture lasted less than a year, for he was again compelled to leave the country and go to Jaffa, on the two charges of arousing the spirit of religious bigotry and teaching revolutionary ideas.¹ A few months later he went to Constantinople, where he was given the position of inspector of publications by the Ottoman Government, and where he renewed his intimacy with Jāmāl al-Dīn. He died there October 11, 1896. He was the author of a considerable amount of poetry, of many political writings, and as many as twenty-one books on various subjects.²

It was after his first return from Jaffa in 1892 that he heard of Muṣṭafā Kāmil who was then, as a student, beginning his articles in the press and his agitation among the students. Al-Nadīm sought out the young Nationalist and instructed him concerning the events through which he himself had passed and inspired him, no doubt, with his own incendiary ideas. As a result, says Zaidān in his account of Muṣṭafā Kāmil, the latter 'acquired some of the characteristics' of Al-Nadīm. It was from him that he received the idea of an alliance with the Khedive in order to forward the cause of Egyptian independence, the first result of which was the inauguration of the annual celebration of the Khedive's accession on January 8, 1893.³

Opposed to the Nationalist party, with its extremist demands, there grew up a number of other parties more or less moderate in their principles. Among the more moderate ones was the party to which many of the followers of Muḥammad 'Abduh belonged, the 'People's Party' (*Ḥizb al-ummah*). Lord Cromer, in his Annual Report for 1906, refers to them as 'a small but increasing number of Egyptians of whom comparatively little is heard', who deserve the title of 'Nationalist' quite as much as the party who claimed it for

¹ *Al-Manār*, ii. 339, 340.

² *Mashāhīr*, ii. 94-100, from which the above details concerning his life are taken. Cf. Gibb, *BSOS*, vol. iv, part iv, p. 755.

³ *Mashāhīr*, i. 289-301.

themselves. They wished to advance the interests of their countrymen and co-religionists but were not tainted with Pan-Islāmism, and they were willing to co-operate with Europeans in introducing Western civilization into Egypt. 'The main hope of Egyptian Nationalism, in the only true and practicable sense of the word, lies, in my opinion, with those who belong to this party.'¹ When the People's Party entered the field during the year 1907, it was the first of the political parties to have a regular organization and to propose a detailed programme covering the political, social, and economic needs of the country. Its example in this respect has been followed by other parties.² Its original programme contained many of the tenets which had been advocated by Muḥammad 'Abduh. It advocated, among other things, the extension of free and compulsory elementary education, the promotion of higher education, and the gradual extension of the principle of representative government by means of councils, from the General Council, down through Provincial and local councils.³ The ranks of the party contained many of the better educated and more thoughtful men of the country, including officials and members of the Legislative Council and the Assembly.⁴

The leader of the party at the time of organization was Ḥasan 'Abd al-Rāziq Pasha, who had been one of the leading members of the Legislative Council during the years that Muḥammad 'Abduh had also been a member, and he had been throughout a close friend and supporter of the latter.⁵ Unfortunately for the party, his death occurred during the latter part of the year 1907. He was succeeded in the leadership of the party by Maḥmūd Pasha Sulaimān (d. 1929),⁶ and later by Aḥmad Luṭfi Bey al-Sayyid, the editor of *Al-Jarīdah*, the organ of the party. With the departure of Lord Cromer

¹ From the Report, quoted at length in *The Truth about Egypt*, p. 81.

² Haikal, *Tarājim*, p. 201.

³ *The Truth about Egypt*, pp. 129 sqq., 137 sqq.; *Egypt*, p. 180.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, i. 591.

⁵ He was one of the speakers at the memorial service at the time of 'Abduh's death, giving an account of his work in the Assembly and in the courts.

⁶ *Tarājim*, pp. 201-3. Later Maḥmūd Pasha became an adherent of the Wafd party and still later of the Liberal Constitutionals.

from Egypt, and the death of some of the leading members, the policy of the party changed from support of the Occupation and co-operation with British officials to denunciations almost as bitter as those of the Nationalists. This change of front led to dissensions within the ranks of the party and many secessions.¹

Something further should be said of the newspaper *Al-Jarīdah*, which served as the mouthpiece of the People's Party from 1907, when both party and paper were founded, until 1914, when publication was discontinued. The founder and editor was Aḥmad Luṭfī Bey al-Sayyid, later Minister of Education and afterwards Director of the reorganized Egyptian University. Under his direction the paper was made the exponent of the progressive reform ideas which were held by the 'Abduh circle and soon became one of the leading newspapers of the country. The political aims of the group who gathered about Luṭfī Bey have been stated as follows by Dr. Muḥammad Ḥusain Haikal, now editor of *Al-Siyāsah*, then, as a young law-student, a member of the group: 'The Egyptians had witnessed the failure of the previous policy which they had followed, namely, that of dependence on France, then on Europe, then on the Sublime Porte. Then a group of them came to believe that it was necessary to adopt another policy, namely, that of preparing the nation for independence through such means as education and character building and the implanting of belief in herself, not out of mere hatred of the English nor out of love for the Sublime Porte and the exalted position of the Caliphate, but rather out of love for independence and freedom for their own sakes. And Luṭfī Bey al-Sayyid, former Minister of Education, was the mouthpiece of those who thought in this way.'² They sought likewise, in the spirit of Muḥammad 'Abduh, to adapt the principles of Western civilization and science to the social and religious life of the country, and also in the literary field, while at the same time preserving a genuine Islāmic character to the whole structure. Thus, Luṭfī Bey himself, with all his independence of thought and progressive ideas, retained a moderately conservative attitude on matters affecting the

¹ *The Truth about Egypt*, pp. 138, 248.

² *Tarājim*, pp. 159, 160.

Islāmic religion. When he commends 'Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah', in his foreword to her *Nisā'īyyāt*, because in her advocacy of reform she has followed a moderate course, within the limits of the Islāmic religion and the Shari'ah,¹ he is evidently commending the policy which he himself approves, and which was, in general, that of the 'Abduh party. It is significant also, as an indication of the ideals and activities of the group, that it was through the efforts of Sa'ad Zaghlūl, Kāsim Amīn, Ḥifnī Nāṣif, Luṭfi al-Sayyid, and other followers of 'Abduh, that the project of a national Egyptian University was brought to realization by the founding of the University in 1908. The idea of such a university seems to have been suggested by Muṣṭafā Kāmil; but it was abandoned in 1905, because of Lord Cromer's disapproval. It is characteristic of Muṣṭafā, says Dr. Haikal, that when word reached him in Europe that Sa'ad Zaghlūl and Kāsim Amīn had announced the formation of a committee to plan for a university, he should write saying that the idea had been his and therefore it must be carried out under his auspices.² When the university was reorganized in 1925, after a period of varying fortunes, Luṭfi al-Sayyid was made Director.³

Opposed to the policy of *Al-Jarīdah*, were the two other leading Islāmic newspapers, *Al-Liwā* of Muṣṭafā Kāmil, and *Al-Mu'ayyad*, edited by Shaikh 'Alī Yūsuf, the latter representing conservative Muslim opinion. Muṣṭafā Kāmil, with all his admiration for Western civilization, which he acknowledges again and again in his writings, was yet, in his ideas regarding social reform, not only conservative but reactionary.⁴ Shaikh 'Alī Yūsuf (1863–1913), with much editorial ability, combined with astute and, at times, not too scrupulous management, had won for *Al-Mu'ayyad*, the position of leading newspaper in the Arabic-speaking world.⁵ When the Khedive 'Abbās II took the paper under his

¹ *Al-Nisā'īyyāt*: collection of articles published in *Al-Jarīdah*, on the subject, 'The Egyptian Woman'. 'Al-Jarīdah' Press, Cairo, 1328/1910, p. v.

² *Tarājīm*, p. 160.

³ Cf. *Egypt*, p. 182; *The Truth about Egypt*, pp. 203 sqq.; *Moslem World*, vol. xvi (1926), 282.

⁴ *Tarājīm*, p. 153.

⁵ It became known as 'The Times of the East'. Cf. *New Mu'ayyad*, August 29, 1930, art. by Aḥmad Luṭfi al-Sayyid.

patronage, Shaikh 'Alī became a frequent companion of the Khedive in his travels and was more loyal to him than was Muṣṭafā Kāmil.¹ Shaikh 'Alī directed the appeal of *Al-Mu'ayyad* largely to conservative, orthodox opinion and, in the view of his opponents at least, he was not above stirring up religious bigotry. Yet he was a great friend of Muḥammad 'Abduh's and Rashīd Riḍā; he accompanied 'Abduh to Constantinople in 1901 on a mission of unknown import,² opened the columns of *Al-Mu'ayyad* to 'Abduh's reply to M. Hanotaux,³ kept him acquainted with the intrigues of the Khedive's entourage, and used his good offices on more than one occasion in an attempt to effect a reconciliation between 'Abduh and the Khedive.⁴

No attempt need be made in this place to follow the varying fortunes, and the changes, often confusing, in membership and policy, which have characterized the history of political parties in Egypt since the beginning of the present century. What has already been said may serve to indicate points of connexion in this history with the 'Abduh movement. The member of 'Abduh's party, however, who attained the greatest distinction in modern Egyptian political life was Sa'ad Pasha Zaghlūl, who, in the years following the World War, gained an international reputation as the spokesman for Egyptian political aspirations. It is no part of the present purpose to give in detail the life-history of this remarkable leader, except so much as is necessary to make clear his connexion with Muḥammad 'Abduh.

Sa'ad was born in 1859, and was thus about ten years younger than 'Abduh. Just when he entered the Azhar University is not clear, whether before 'Abduh had completed his studies and while he was giving informal lectures to those of the students who desired his help, or after he had become a lecturer in the institution; but it appears that, from the time of his entrance, he became one of 'Abduh's pupils.⁵ With others of the latter's pupils he attended Jamāl's

¹ Cf. *Tārīkh*, i. 594.

² *Ibid.*, p. 848.

³ Cf. above, pp. 86 sqq.

⁴ *Tārīkh*, i. 594. For general review of his policy with reference to 'Abduh, cf. *Al-Manār*, xvi. 873-8, 947-56; cf. also *Al-Hilāl*, xxii. 148-51.

⁵ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 584 sqq. In three articles the relations between

lectures. As he was only a beginner, he was not prepared to profit to a great extent from the lectures on advanced texts in philosophy and theology which Jamāl was then giving. Moreover, it would seem that his attendance could not have extended over a very long period before Jamāl was compelled, in 1879, to leave Egypt. Yet he profited in other respects from his contact with him; in particular, his later success as a political orator is attributed to the training which he received from him.¹

Sa'ad's relation to Muḥammad 'Abduh is represented as being, from the first, very intimate in character. He was not only a pupil as many others were, he was a 'disciple' (*murīd*), like the initiate of the Ṣūfī orders who submits himself unquestioningly to the direction of his superior. 'Abduh treated him like a son and devoted an amount of time and attention to his training in religious, literary, and political matters that he gave to none of his other pupils. When he became editor-in-chief of the *Journal Officiel* he chose Sa'ad as one of his assistants, in spite of his youth. The value of the practical training thus afforded, in dealing with the social, political, and economic questions that were disturbing the country previous to and during the days of the 'Arābī uprising, in familiarity with all the affairs of the Government, and in actual practice in literary expression, under the tutelage of so able a teacher and leader as Muḥammad 'Abduh, can scarcely be over-estimated.² Sa'ad himself, in those early days, was pleased to acknowledge himself a disciple of the man who had become one of the recognized leaders of the country. Writing to 'Abduh after the latter's banishment from Egypt, he speaks of himself and others as 'we the group of your followers and disciples', he complains of a 'weakness' in his thoughts which has been troubling him since his experiences during the 'Arābī period, and entreats his master not to leave

Sa'ad and 'Abduh are discussed, to show how much the former owed to the latter with respect to his character and training.

¹ Ibid., p. 710.

² Ibid., xxii (1921), 510. The article, entitled 'The New Stage in the Egyptian Question', is a defence of Sa'ad's conduct relative to the disruption which occurred in the ranks of the Egyptian Delegation (*Wafd*) of which he was the head. The article contains further biographical details.

off writing to him to give him strength and encouragement. He concludes, 'May God aid us in following you', and signs himself, 'Your son'.¹

After 'Abduh left Egypt, Sa'ad took up the practice of law. He rose rapidly in his profession until he became, first, a judge in the Native Tribunals and, finally, Counsellor to the Court of Appeal. He won recognition as an accomplished orator and debater, and became known for his exactness with regard to legal details, his independence of opinion, and his justice in rendering decisions.² In 1906 he was made Minister of Public Instruction that he might quell the spirit of insurrection which was rife among the students as a result of the agitation of Muṣṭafā Pasha Kāmil and which was rapidly rendering all discipline in the schools impossible. In this he was not entirely successful, although he showed much energy and foresight in his reforms. But he did succeed in becoming, more than any other Egyptian, the target of Nationalist attacks.³ Later, he was made Minister of Justice, and when the new Legislative Assembly was established in 1913, was chosen the first Vice-President. The subsequent events of his career, beginning with his request, in 1918, that he and the other members of the Egyptian Delegation might present Egypt's political claims and aspirations before the British Foreign Office, to his death on August 24, 1927, through which he rose to the greatest heights of popularity and power as the champion of Egyptian independence, beloved and idolized by all classes of the population, are of too recent occurrence and too familiar to require recounting here.

One salient feature of his career can scarcely escape attention, in even such a brief review of it as that just given, and that is, the decided change in his attitude towards the British Occupation. During the greater part of his public career he was a sincere and able supporter of the Occupation and co-operated in its programme of administrative reform. The fact that he was chosen as head of the Ministry of Public

¹ *Al-Manār* xxviii. 591, 592.

² *Ibid.*, xxii. 510. His early rise may have been due, in part, to the influential position of his father-in-law, Muṣṭafā Pasha Fahmī, long Prime Minister and friend of the Occupation. (*Egypt*, p. 233.)

³ *The Truth about Egypt*, pp. 55, 193.

Instruction at a time when the schools were the focus of Nationalist agitation, affords evidence of the confidence which the Government entertained with regard to him. His defence before the Assembly in 1909 of Government's proposals regarding the extension of the Suez Canal Concession, which was being bitterly opposed by the Nationalists, is another evidence of his loyalty.¹ In the willingness to co-operate which he had thus far shown, he was following the precedent set by Muḥammad 'Abduh, which, indeed, had become one of the principles of 'Abduh's party. Lord Cromer in his Annual Report for 1906, speaks of Sa'ad as 'one of the distinguished members' of 'Abduh's party;² and in his farewell speech he refers to him as 'one with whom I have only recently co-operated, but for whom, in that short time, I have learned to entertain a high regard'.³ 'Later in his life', says Rashīd Riḍā, 'Sa'ad entered upon a period of following European customs in his daily life and in his opinions regarding social and legal affairs, and the idea of Egyptian nationality got the better of the idea of the "Islāmic Society"' (advocated by *Al-Manār*). He continued, however, to say that Muslims will not make any real advance except by the religious reform which Muḥammad 'Abduh and Jamāl had advocated.⁴ Whatever the reasons which led to this change of front—and they are to be sought for in political considerations rather than in matters which concern us in this discussion—the fact remains that the most able of the co-operators became the strongest opponent of the British and the most determined and unyielding advocate of the complete independence of Egypt.

Sufficient has been said to show the part which the training and influence of Muḥammad 'Abduh played in the preparation of the ablest and most distinguished of the modern political leaders who have sprung directly from the soil of Egypt. The progress of events and the growth of political ideas in Egypt conspired with his native abilities and his training to win him a foremost place as a successful leader. For the readiness of the nation to assent to his leadership, as Rashīd Riḍā

¹ *The Truth about Egypt*, p. 328.

² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

³ *Egypt*, p. 233.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 711.

suggests, was quite as important a factor in his success as his own preparedness and experience. 'Had it not been for this (readiness)', he says, 'his own preparedness would have gone for naught, as did that of his master, Muḥammad 'Abduh, whose preparedness was greater than that of Sa'ad.'¹

Social Reform.

One of the prominent and essential ideas in the pages of Muḥammad 'Abduh's writings and in *Al-Manār* is the necessity for the training and education of girls, no less than of boys, and for the reform of the social conditions and customs affecting the lives of the women of Muslim lands. In nothing does Islām show its fitness to be considered a modern world religion, they held, more than in the high position of honour which it accords to woman. In all essential respects, according to its teaching, she is on an equality with man. Polygamy, although permitted in the *Ḳur'ān*, is a concession to necessary social conditions which was given with the greatest reluctance, inasmuch as it is accompanied by the proviso that a man may marry more than one wife only when he is able to care for all and give to each her rights with impartiality and justice. The practical impossibility of doing so, it is said, indicates that the Divine Law, in its intent, contemplated monogamy as the original and ideal state of marriage.² There are other indications to the same effect in the Divine Law, as, for example, in the law of inheritance which provides that all the surviving wives together, if there be more than one, shall inherit the portion of only one wife.³ Because the original intent of the *Ḳur'ān* has been ignored, the evils of polygamy and of easy and frequent divorce and of other harmful social customs, it is frequently pointed out, have affected unfavourably the social and moral status of women in Muslim lands. It is essential that these conditions should be corrected, if necessary by appropriate changes in the canon law of Islām, certainly by improved opportunities for education, that the

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 714.

² *Tafsīr*, iv. 349 sqq. (*Al-Manār*, xii. 571 sqq.), on *Sūrah* iv. 3; *Koranauslegung*, pp. 360-3; *Al-Manār*, ii. 125, &c.

³ *Al-Manār*, xii. 741, on *Sūrah* iv. 14.

women may be raised to the level originally contemplated in the religion of Islām.¹

But it remained for one of 'Abduh's younger followers, Kāsim Amīn (1865–1908), who, at the time of his death on April 22, 1908, was still a comparatively young man, to make this field of reform particularly his own and to arouse Egyptian public opinion by his writings to an unprecedented extent. In 1900 his book on *The Emancipation of Woman* ('Tahrīr al-mar'ah') appeared, and this was followed in a year or two by his second book, *The New Woman* ('Al-mar'ah al-jadīdah'), which was a defence of his first book and a reply to its critics. These two books, said *Al-Manār* at the time of their appearance, produced a greater impression on the public than any other recent book.² The author was maligned and attacked on all sides, because it was thought that his teaching would undermine the foundations of Muslim society. A recent contributor to the newspaper *Al-Siyāsah* states that, in studying the works of Kāsim and the replies which they evoked, he had discovered no less than thirty books and pamphlets written to refute his books or to attack him personally.³ Yet to-day he is hailed as 'the hero of the feminist awakening and its founder'.⁴

Kāsim Amīn was one of the little group of men who were mutual friends and followers of Muḥammad 'Abduh, whose death occurred not long after that of their leader. He was a judge in the Court of Appeal of the Native Tribunals, and, in addition to his training in the law which was obtained in France, had studied works in ethics, sociology, psychology, and similar subjects. He was a thinker rather than a doer, is the judgement of *Al-Manār*, and some of his views on religious and sociological topics may be thought visionary.⁵ Yet he

¹ *Tafsīr*, iv. 349 sqq.; on changes in the law, pp. 363 sqq.; on divorce, pp. 383 sqq.; on excesses in mourning customs, pp. 419 sqq.; on unsatisfactory state of marriage relationships, pp. 430 sqq., &c. ² *Al-Manār*, iv (1901), 26.

³ *Emancipation of Woman*, Cairo, 3rd edition, no date, pp. 194 sqq., reproduced as supplement from *Al-Siyāsah*.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 193, quotation from an address by Madame Hūdā Sha'arāwī, leader of the Feminist Movement in Egypt, President of 'L'Union Féministe Égyptienne', which was founded in 1923.

⁵ *Al-Manār*, xi (1908–9), 226–9. A few biographical details are given. His life and work are reviewed at greater length in *Mashāhīr*, i. 310–19.

could devote himself with enthusiasm and persistence to the cause in which his sympathy had been enlisted. His efforts on behalf of the proposed Egyptian University, to which he gave much time during the last two years of his life as Vice-Chairman of the Organizing Committee, furnish an instance of this. The opening of the university in December 1908 did not occur until after his death.

He had not been previously interested in the education of women and reforms on their behalf, until certain disparaging remarks of a French writer about Egyptian family life, and especially the use of the veil, led him to write a reply in French, in which he defended the use of the veil as a safeguard of society and severely criticized the promiscuity and laxity of European social life.¹ From that time he began to study European works on the relation of woman to society and, as a result, became convinced that the real moral and material advancement of Egypt lay in the uplift of its women. He therefore wrote his *Emancipation of Woman*, directing his appeal for reform to the educated people of the country, all of whom, he believed, were persuaded of the need of reform.²

In his book he takes the general position of the 'Abduh teaching with reference to the high position of woman in Islām as fundamentally conceived. The present degradation of woman in Muslim countries is due to national traits of the nations which have accepted Islām; particularly, the spirit of oppression and tyranny has been perpetuated by tyrannical governments, and the men, oppressed themselves, have in turn become oppressors of the weaker sex. Education is the primary necessity for the uplift of the women. Education is discussed with reference to woman's function in society and in family life. Egyptian society, the author says, has suffered incalculable loss through the ignorance of half of the population, that is, the women, and to the same source is due a condition of family life in general, 'than which hell itself is, I suppose, more tolerable' (p. 32). Woman needs to be educated that her thoughts may be uplifted and that she may

¹ His reply was written under the title *Les Égyptiens: Réponse à M. le Duc d'Harcourt*. Cf. *Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah-baḥth intikādī* (a Critical Study), by Al-Ānisah 'Mayy' (Māri Ziyādah), Al-Muḥṭaṭif Press, Cairo, 1920, p. 129.

² *Al-Manār*, xi. 228.

be freed from superstitions. She should receive enough primary education in a number of subjects, so that she may be able to continue her studies privately later in any one of these, should she choose. Moral and spiritual attractions, as well as physical, between husband and wife are essential to happy marital life, and these are due to similarity in education. Training of mind and character are also essential that she may properly manage her household and train her children. These views are commonplace enough to Western thought, and even to Egyptian educational leaders of the present day. But they were sufficiently revolutionary in Egypt at a time when public opinion did not favour the education of women and girls.

It was his remarks in regard to the use of the veil which excited the greatest storm of protest. He did not advocate an immediate abolishment of its use, indeed, he defends it as a principle of morality. But neither the *Qur'ān* nor the Divine Law require the present excessive use of it. Its use does not promote a wholesome moral influence, rather the contrary, for it strengthens the idea that the only reason why meetings between the sexes should take place is for purposes of passion. The isolation of girls at the period of adolescence, when they should be mingling with others and learning from them, is harmful, and the exclusion of women in inactivity and idleness is deteriorating to character. The women and girls should be permitted to mingle freely in general society, and take their part in charitable works, in business, and in public life.

In regard to marriage and family life, he advocates such education of the women, accompanied by suitable changes in social customs and the laws of the country, as will result in a higher conception of marriage and marital life than that which is entertained by the books of canon law. If compatibility of mind and temperament between husband and wife are to be secured, as well as physical attraction, acquaintance between the two previous to marriage must be possible. And the woman should have an equal right with the man to choose her partner in marriage. Polygamy is opposed as the source of many evils in family life, and

monogamy is advocated, on the general grounds of the 'Abduh teaching, as the ideal form of marriage. Stringent reforms in regard to divorce are also required, he declares. The Christian attitude regarding divorce is a counsel of perfection to which governments, and even the Church itself, have not been able to conform. But divorce in Egypt, he says, is too easy and too frequent. This is because the schools of canon law permit the simple pronouncement of the three-fold formula of divorce to operate, whether the intention of divorce is present or not. As against this, he holds that the intention of divorce is essential, and he therefore proposes a model law, regulating procedure in cases of divorce, according to which the case proceeds regularly before a judge, in the presence of witnesses, after previous attempts at reconciliation between the parties have failed. The women also should be given the right of divorce, which is denied absolutely by some of the schools of canon law.

The tide of disapproval which Kāsim's books set in motion was still overwhelmingly against him when he died, and even to-day, says the writer in *Al-Siyāṣah* whose remarks were quoted above, one still finds those who disapprove; but the number of those who believe that he was right is constantly increasing, indeed, nothing less than a revolution of thought has taken place. 'If he were to return to-day (after only twenty years)', says Dr. Haikal in his biographical account of Kāsim, 'and witnessed, as a result of his summons, this compulsory education for boys and girls, this great woman's movement in the various phases of life, this comparative freedom that women now enjoy, and this reform in legislation concerning personal status—what has already been accomplished and what is about to be accomplished—he would be filled with astonishment; and then his astonishment would be turned into rejoicing—and how great that rejoicing!—by reason of these results. And then his rejoicing would be followed by regret for the conservatism which he was compelled to observe in his books, forced thereto by the spirit of his unyielding generation.'¹ Reading his two books to-day, the same writer continues, we learn how conservative the

¹ *Tarājīm*, p. 164.

programme was which shook the very foundations of the customs of his day. To-day his appeal serves only as a picture of the ideas and customs current in his day and as one out of thousands of the same kind of appeals that are being written to-day, and, indeed, in most cases, those of to-day are more advanced and radical than his.¹ His ideas regarding general education and his literary ideals were likewise in advance of his time, but of these we cannot here speak in detail. It will be sufficient to refer to his hope that the new university would be a step towards the realization of a wider programme which would include a revolution in language and literature similar to that which his two books effected with regard to the education of women and the use of the veil.²

Ḳāsim Amīn's appeal on behalf of the women of Egypt found support from an unexpected quarter when Malak Ḥifnī Nāṣif (1886-1918) began during the years 1907-9, when the furor regarding Ḳāsim's books was still in progress, to write and speak on behalf of women's rights. As a daughter of Ḥifnī Bey Nāṣif, a distinguished member of 'Abduh's party³ she was trained according to the more liberal standards which were held in that circle. After attending various primary schools, she entered the Saniyyah Training School for women teachers in 1893. She obtained the Government Primary certificate in 1900, the first year in which girls offered for that examination. She then continued her studies in the secondary division, receiving the diploma in 1903. Thereafter she taught in Government schools for girls. In 1907 she was married to 'Abd al-Sattār al-Bāsil Pasha, a prominent member of an influential family of pure Arab stock. From this latter circumstance she derived her pen-name, 'Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah', signifying 'the Inquiring Desert-woman'. She died, much lamented, on October 17, 1918.⁴ A memorial service following her death, at which the Minister of Education presided, was attended by the leading men of the country and the list of speakers included not only

¹ *Tarājim*, p. 170.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 169, 170. Cf. also pp. 174-7 for discussion of his ideals regarding education, and the Arabic language and literature.

³ See above, p. 212.

⁴ *Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah*, p. xii, also p. 144.

men of advanced views but also conservative men of the 'Shaikh' class. On the first anniversary of her death a women's memorial service was held in the Egyptian University, at which Madame Sha'arāwī Pasha presided. At both of these gatherings words of praise were said of her which had never before been spoken of a woman in Egypt.¹

Her collected articles and addresses show that she did not hesitate to deal with many of the problems which Kāsim's books had made the subject of heated controversy. There are articles on such subjects as the following: 'A View of Marriage—Woman's complaints against it'; 'The Use or Disuse of the Veil'; 'Our Schools and our Young Women'; 'The Education of Girls in Home and School'; 'Marriage'; 'Polygamy'; 'The Marriage Age'; 'Painting of the Face'; &c. In an article on 'Women's Principles', she analyses the faults and weaknesses of women which contribute to unhappiness in the family and the failure of marriage; and she does the same for the men under the title 'Corresponding Ideas in Men'. In other articles she discusses some of the reasons why men lose their good influence with their families, and the evils of marrying two sisters to the same husband, as plural wives, and other problems of family life. In some of her addresses she replies to objections raised by men to the education of women, pointing to the ability of women even in horsemanship, war, politics, &c., when given a chance; she maintains that they should be permitted to engage in some useful form of employment during their spare time and that they have the personal right to engage in law, medicine, and other professions.² The following 'Ten Points' in accordance with which she thought legislation desirable, fairly sum up her views: (1) Teaching of true religion to girls—the Kūr'ān and the true Sunnah. (2) Primary and secondary education for girls, the former compulsory for all classes of the population. (3) Teaching of domestic science, theoretical and practical health laws, training of children, first aid, &c. (4) Appointment by the Government of a certain number of girls, sufficient to meet the needs of the women of Egypt, to be trained in medicine and the science of education. (5)

¹ *Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah*, pp. 181–3.

² *Al-Nisā'īyyāt*, pp. 95 sqq.

Entire freedom to every woman or girl to study anything else that she may desire. (6) Training of girls from childhood in truthfulness, energy in work, patience, &c. (7) The following of the prescribed legal forms in the contracting of marriages, no parties to be married except at the hands of the proper official. (8) The adoption of the practice of Turkish women in Constantinople in regard to wearing the veil and appearing in public. (9) The maintenance of the welfare of the country and refusal, so far as possible, to adopt that which is foreign, either in things or persons (e.g. foreign marriages). (10) The men to see that the foregoing principles are put into practice.¹

It is apparent that 'Bāhithat al-Bādiyah' was greatly influenced by Kāsim Amīn, and that she was following his lead, even though she declared in one of her poems that she did not belong to his way of thinking, meaning probably that she did not go the length to which he did. Miss 'Mayy', in her discerning comparison of the two,² says in regard to her denial: 'It is a denial that shows that she was not giving him his dues—I dare not say that she did not understand him. For how could I dare to say that when I believe, in spite of myself, that his influence over her was great, and that she took up the pen with courage only because his pen inspired her, preparing a path for her in the hearts of the people and creating a receptiveness and readiness in their thoughts.' She, like him, sought definite objectives and went about her reform almost in the same way in which he did. She was his daughter in thought and daring and his pupil in advocating reform in women's affairs. It is no contradiction of this that there were slight differences between the two.³

At the same time, she was more conservative than he. 'She walked warily', says Miss 'Mayy', 'in the midst of the varieties of new thoughts and modern opinions. For every forward step that she took she looked backward, in order to be assured that she was following the path which connects the past with the future.' She sought to follow a middle course, preserving as much as possible of current customs. 'When you hear her raise her voice, you frequently imagine

¹ *Al-Nisā'iyyāt*, pp. 117, 118.

² *Bāhithat al-Bādiyah*, p. 112.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

that she is doing it to assure you that she is not afraid; and you conjecture in like manner that she is raising her voice in order to hear a human voice—even though it be her own—that will remove from her the feeling of fear and dismay in her solitariness of thought.' On the other hand, Kāsim spoke out without fear.¹ Her greater conservatism appears, for example, in regard to discarding the use of the veil. Kāsim did not advocate discarding it at once; he agreed with her that a period of education is necessary first, but he believed in greater freedom of social intercourse between the sexes than was then thought permissible. She, on the other hand, did not approve of discarding the veil, not on religious or economic grounds but on social grounds; it stands for greater freedom between the sexes and this is not to be desired. 'When we study the different classes of society', she says, 'and compare the degree to which the women mingle with the men in each class, we learn for a certainty that the class that mingles most freely is the most corrupt.'² They both believed in the desirability of acquaintance between the man and the woman before marriage; but while Kāsim favoured free opportunities of intercourse that acquaintanceship might come about naturally, she thought that two or three meetings are sufficient to discover whether the two are mutually attracted and to reveal essential traits of character. Further information can be obtained by discreet questioning on the part of the two families concerned.³

In 1911, 'Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah' presented to the Legislative Assembly ten claims for women, based on the above 'Ten Points', requesting access for women to the mosques, compulsory education for boys and girls, equal opportunities for women in education in professional schools, reforms regarding marriage and divorce, &c.⁴ These proposals were at that time rejected, but the author of them continued her agitation for these and similar reforms, although, for some time before her death, her pen was silent because, as she confessed, she was discouraged regarding the possibility of accomplishing anything and uncertain as to the best course to pursue.⁵ It

¹ *Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah*, p. 125. ² *Al-Nisā'īyyāt*, p. 9. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁴ *Moslem World*, xxi (1926), 277 sqq. ⁵ *Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah*, pp. 153, 154

should not be inferred that nothing had been done for women and girls before this time. Education for girls, for instance, was not a new thing in Egypt. As long previous as 1856, the first school for girls was founded by American missionaries. The first Government school for girls was founded by the Khedive Ismā'il Pasha in 1873. But general recognition of the rights of women can only be the result of a long process of growth. To this process, Kāsim and 'Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah' contributed each in characteristic way. If it is difficult to estimate the extent of their influence, it is still more difficult to imagine conditions if they had not written, as Miss 'Mayy' suggests.¹ But there can be no question that the present feminist movement in Egypt, which acknowledges its indebtedness to the leadership of Kāsim, is an acceleration of this process. There are now three leading feminist associations in Egypt, each with its own organ of publicity. 'L'Union Féministe Égyptienne', a woman's suffrage organization which was formed on March 26, 1923, with Madame Hudā Sha'arāwī as president, has published a programme of social, political, and educational reform, including equal opportunities for women, reforms of the marriage laws, raising the age of consent for girls to sixteen years, public hygiene, and child welfare.²

Apologetics.

Since it was a fundamental postulate of the 'Abduh school that the true, in other words, the reformed, Islām is suitable in all respects to be considered the most reasonable modern faith, it followed as a corollary to this that they should be willing to demonstrate this suitability on all occasions. They have revealed great aptness and ingenuity in doing so; no difficulties of literal statement, in the Ḳur'ān itself or in any of the other sources which they recognize as fundamental to

¹ *Bāḥithat al-Bādiyah*, p. 144.

² *Egypt*, p. 287. In addition to this reference and the article in the *Moslem World* previously mentioned, the following may be consulted: 'The Women's Movement in the Near and Middle East', art. in *Asiatic Review*, April 1928, pp. 188 sqq.; 'Madame Hoda Charaoui—a Modern Woman of Egypt', art. in *The Woman Citizen*, September 1927; on the Women's Movement in Turkey, *Memoirs of Halidé Edib*, London, 1926.

Islām, have been regarded as impossible of harmonization with the most advanced scientific ideas of the present day. Further, they have not been content to remain on the defensive, but have carried the attack into the Christian camp, by making use of the methods and results of modern critical scholarship in Europe and America and of the literature of Western atheistic and rationalistic attacks upon the sources, doctrines, and practices of Christianity. Some examples have already been given of the apologetic writings of 'Abduh, and of Rashīd Riḍā in *Al-Manār*. Mention must now be made of one who was most active in this field until his early death in 1920, Dr. Muḥammad Tawfiḳ Şidkī (1881-1920), physician in the Government Department of Prisons at Ṭurrah, near Cairo.

It was during his days as a medical student that Dr. Şidkī began his special studies which led to his devoting so much of his attention to apologetic writings. His reading of the polemic writings of Christian missionaries regarding Islām had raised many doubts in his mind; his reading of *Al-Manār* had suggested certain lines of study which seemed to offer hope of escape from these difficulties. As a result, he entered upon a course of reading and study, under the direction of Rashīd Riḍā, which issued eventually in his unequivocal acceptance of the new Islām as expounded by Muḥammad 'Abduh.¹ He summarizes his creed as 'the Islām that is established by logical proof, and which consists in obedience and uprightness and in personal and social reform'.² The results of this study appeared as a series of articles in *Al-Manār* under the caption, 'Religion from the View Point of Sound Reason' (*Al-dīn fī naẓar al-'akl al-ṣaḥīḥ*). These have since been published in book form.³ Most of his views on theology, prophecy, and the Qur'ān, says Rashīd Riḍā, were derived from the writings of Muḥammad 'Abduh, his studies of Muslim writings and of Western books were directed by Rashīd Riḍā. In these articles Islām appears as the perfect and final religion.

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxi. 483 sqq., account of his life and work.

² *Ibid.*, p. 494.

³ They appeared first in *Al-Manār*, viii. 1905. First printed separately during his lifetime, 2nd ed., 1346/1927-8, Al-Manār Press, 176 pp.

Another line of studies is represented in his article on 'Astronomy and the Ḳur'ān'.¹ The article deals with descriptive astronomy, and treats instructively of the earth, the planets and their orbits, the fixed stars, the revolving moons, &c. In each case, it is shown that the teaching of the Ḳur'ān anticipates and agrees with the modern scientific explanation. It recognizes that there are systems of stars, bound together by the force of gravitation, a fact which Europeans claim to have discovered but which is thus anticipated by the Ḳur'ān. This is one of the evidentiary miracles of the Ḳur'ān of a scientific nature.² At the end of the world the power of attraction which holds the systems together will be loosed and the stars scattered, as the Ḳur'ān says (Sūrah lxxxii. 1; lxxxiv. 1).³ The 'seven heavens' which are frequently mentioned in the Ḳur'ān are the seven planets, for, etymologically, the heavens are anything that is above man or overhead; and these are represented as being in layers or planes, that is, one above the other, because the orbit of each is above the orbit of the other.⁴ Since our solar system revolves around a certain star, the identity of which is not exactly known, it is clear that the other systems also are in motion around a fixed star. It is not a remote possibility, then, that all these systems revolve around one centre common to all, which attracts and controls and regulates all, the throne or seat of the universe. The most probable view is that this common centre of the universe is what the Ḳur'ān means by the 'Throne of God'. This star is fixed in its place by means of special forces which God has established, the nature of which we do not know, but which are spoken of in the Ḳur'ān as the eight angels which bear the throne of God (as in Sūrah lix. 15, and elsewhere).⁵ There are many other interesting and ingenious cases of interpretation and harmonization, but the foregoing illustrations must suffice.

A third field in which Dr. Ṣidkī employed his pen was that of polemics against Christianity. Numbers of his articles appeared in volumes xv and xvi of *Al-Manār*, some of which have since been published separately. Some of these articles

¹ *Al-Manār*, xiv. 577-600.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 580.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 585.

² *Ibid.*, p. 580.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 590.

were so virulent, *Al-Manār* states, that protests were lodged by the missionaries with the authorities, with the result that Dr. Şiddī was forbidden to write further articles of that nature, and *Al-Manār* published its intention to follow thereafter a more lenient course of reply. One of his articles deals with the crucifixion of Christ and his resurrection.¹ The common Muslim view is given, that Judas Iscariot was crucified instead of Jesus. This is supported by statements from the supposed Gospel of Barnabas and the beliefs of certain early heretical Christian sects, as the Cerinthians and the Carpocratians. The evidence of the Gospels is examined in detail and discredited. Another work bears the title, *A View Concerning the Books of the New Testament and the Doctrines of Christianity*.² A detailed discussion is made of the external testimony for the books of the New Testament, as well as of the internal evidence. Much is made of the differences between the Gospel of John and the Synoptic Gospels. The greater part of the New Testament, it is argued, is the work of Paul, who was at enmity with the other Apostles, and many of whose statements are contradictory and exaggerated. Paul himself was subject to epileptic fits, and on this ground his supposed conversion and his visions are to be explained. Many objections to the New Testament are found on doctrinal grounds; intimations in the Gospels of limitations in the knowledge of Jesus, for example, are turned as arguments against the doctrine of his Divine nature. The character of Jesus himself is not immune from suggestions of a derogatory nature. Evidences also of textual corruption are found, as in the different statements regarding the hour at which the crucifixion took place. In such manner as the foregoing, at great length and in great detail, the attempt is made to show the mistaken and unreasonable character of Christian beliefs and the corrupt and uncertain nature of the text of the Scriptures upon which they are based.

¹ 'My View concerning the Crucifixion of Christ and his Resurrection from the Dead', pp. 87 sqq. of work entitled *The Doctrine of Crucifixion and Redemption* ('Akīdat al-şalb wa al-fidā') by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, *Al-Manār* Press, 1331/1913.

² *Nazarah fī kutub al-jadīd wa 'akā'id al-naşrāniyyah*, *Al-Manār* Press, 1331/1913, 264 pp.

Muḥammad Farīd Wajdī (1875–) is another of the 'Abduh circle who has done a great deal of apologetic writing, although he seems to have given particular attention to sociological studies. Thus, *Al-Hilāl*, the leading Arabic literary periodical, after mentioning that he has been studying and writing for not less than thirty years, remarks that he may be considered as almost alone in his knowledge of Egyptian life from the sociological point of view.¹ His principal apologetic work, *Islām and Civilization*, appeared in 1899, to which Rashīd Riḍā accords the highest praise possible for him to give, as he says, when he places it second only to 'Abduh's *Risālat al-tawḥīd* as a modern statement of the principles of Islām, and he points out a number of respects in which Wajdī has followed 'Abduh, not only in his style but also in his method of approach to the topics treated.² Dr. Muhiddin, in his history of Turkish modernism, refers to Farīd Wajdī as one of the Egyptians who have pointed out the connexion of Turkish reform with the religious awakening in Egypt under the leadership of Muḥammad 'Abduh.³ That he inclines toward the conservative side, however, may be judged from the fact that he wrote a reply to Kāsim Amīn.⁴ He has written and compiled, apparently unaided, *The Twentieth-century Encyclopedia of Knowledge and Language* ('Dā'irat Ma'ārif al-ḡarn al-'ishrīn'), of which ten volumes have thus far appeared. The list of his works contains a number of others on scientific and philosophical subjects.⁵ In 1921 he began the issue of a bi-monthly journal, entitled *Al-Wajdiyyāt*, containing moral essays in the form of dialogues of birds personified, &c., and also brief articles, of a popular nature, on religious, philosophical, and scientific subjects.

¹ *Al-Hilāl*, November 1931. Wajdī reviews the development of forty years from the point of view of 'Civilization and Society'.

² *Al-Manār*, ii. 110, 111. A selection from his book is printed with 'Abduh's *Al-Islām wa al-radd 'alā muntaḥidihi*, 1343/1924, 1925, pp. 131 sqq.

³ *Die Kulturbewegung im modernen Turkenum*, Dr. Phil. Ahmed Muhiddin, Leipzig, 1921, p. 64. He also mentions 'Abd al-'Azīz Bey Shawīsh and 'Abd al-Malik Ḥamzah Bey in the same connexion.

⁴ Sarkis, *Maṭbū'āt*, cols. 1451–2, 'al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah', reply to 'Al-Mar'ah al-Jadidah'.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Only seventeen numbers appeared, however, the last one dated April 15, 1922.¹

His apologetic work, *Islām and Civilization*, which was first written in French and then translated into Arabic,² was composed with the special object of 'acquainting Europeans with the truth about the Islāmic religion and to prove that it assures to man the acquisition of the two happinesses (Here and Hereafter), and secures for him ease in both existences' (p. 5). This is necessary because Westerners have become the ruling power in the greater part of the Muslim world and yet remain ignorant of the essential and true Islām, thinking of it only as a burden to the intellect, which they hope to reform by modern learning. They are excusable in holding such ideas of Islām, so long as they see before their eyes only innovations devised by light-minded people and followed by the masses—innovations such as funeral customs, *mawlid*s, *zikrs*, and many other things (p. 5). 'If they see these things and educated Muslims make no effort to remove them, what blame can attach to Westerners if they think this is Islām?' (p. 6). Therefore, the author hopes to accomplish a twofold purpose, namely, advocate reform and defend the true Islām.

The spirit of the work may be indicated by the following quotations, the sense of which is repeated many times: 'There is no principle that has been discovered by experience and no theory that has been established by the testimony of the senses, which have had an influence in the progress of man and in uplifting civilization, but are an echo of a verse from the Qur'ān or of a tradition of the Prophet; so that the observer imagines that all effort and energy on the part of the scholars of the world towards the uplift of mankind have no other purpose than to bring practical proof of the truth of the principles of Islām' (p. 40). In this spirit, the Islāmic regulations regarding slavery are held to be the highest type of humanitarian arrangement (pp. 118 sqq.), and the conduct of the Islāmic state towards subject races of other religions

¹ *Majmū'at al-Wajdiyyāt*. First number February 15, 1921.

² *Al-Madaniyyah wa al-Islām—aw taḥbīk al-dīyānah al-Islāmiyyah 'alā al-nawāmis al-Masīhiyyah*—2nd ed., 1322/1904, 162 pp.

within its borders (for the only relation possible for people of other religions within the bounds of the Islāmic state is that of subject races) is the highest example of the toleration of one religion towards another (pp. 125 sqq.).

Wajdī has also interested himself in another line of research, namely, that of the occult and the spiritual. In his *Wajdiyyāt* he concerns himself with replies to the materialistic philosophy, advancing results of spiritualistic investigations and occult experiences as indications of the immortality of the spirit. Its pages contain also translations of selections from Camille Flammarion, under the title, 'Death and its Mysteries', the purpose of which is, Wajdī says, to establish sensible proofs of life after death. The same spiritualistic ideas occur in his *Encyclopedia* where he deals with the 'Jinn'. He says, after remarking that many shaikhs, who are to be trusted, have related that they saw and conversed with 'Jinn': 'This is not unreasonable nor is it opposed to the laws of creation that God should create some spirits clothed with matter and other spirits free from matter. Can any one raise objection to such a belief, after the fact has been established in Europe that spirits freed from matter have appeared and have communicated with people, in seances for the calling up of spirits.'¹

The name of another follower of Muḥammad 'Abduh who put forth apologetic works on behalf of the reformed Islām should be added, on the authority of Professor Martin Hartmann.² This writer is Shaikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, formerly Professor of Arabic Literature in the 'Dār al-'Ulūm' in Cairo. Three works by this author are reviewed by Dr. Hartmann. The first is *The Crown Bedecked with the Jewels of the Kur'ān and the Sciences*.³ The book is divided into fifty-two sections or 'Jewels', in which the attempt is made to arrange the Ḳur'ān verses in six sections according to subject-matter, the plan of the work being to present in brief form the principal

¹ *Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif*, iii. 188, 189.

² *Beiträge zur Kenntniss des Orients*, xiii, 1916, pp. 54-82, article entitled 'Shaich Ṭanṭāwī Dschauhari—Ein moderner ägyptischer Theolog und Naturfreund'.

³ *Al-tāj al-muraṣṣa' bi-jawāhir al-Ḳur'ān wa al-'ulūm*, Cairo, Taḳaddum Press, 1324/1906.

doctrines of Islām. The second work is *The Beauty of the World*.¹ As the title suggests, this work consists for the most part of a series of nature studies, of animals, birds, and insects, with, however, other studies of a theological or scientific nature introduced also. The third work is entitled, *Order and the World*.² All three works, the second in particular, are characterized by a marked love of nature, in which the influence of the works of John Lubbock, the English nature lover, are noticeable, especially his *The Pleasures of Life* and *The Beauties of Nature and the Wonders of the World* (1892).³

The first of the author's works was written as an apologetic for the religion of Islām and a summons to other nations to embrace it. The author had Japan principally in mind when he wrote it, and therefore dedicated it to the Mikado and sent it to be presented before the Japanese Parliament of Religions in 1906.⁴ Through the instrumentality of his friend, Maḥmūd Bey Sālim, the book was also translated into other languages for circulation in Turkey, Persia, and Russia. The work is, to a certain extent, autobiographical; he tells of his studies in the Azhar University, and his efforts to reconcile Greek philosophy and modern science with the Qur'ān. The work reveals also the important influence which the teachings of Al-Ghazzālī exerted upon his thought.

Dr. Hartmann states directly that Shaikh Ṭanṭāwī was a pupil of Muḥammad 'Abduh.⁵ The statement is abundantly confirmed by a comparison of the doctrines contained in these works with those of 'Abduh. The chief Qur'ān passage to which the author gives a detailed explanation in his first work was Sūrah ii. 159, on the signs of God in nature, the passage which had led him to the study of natural science; this is one of the main passages upon which 'Abduh relies as a summons to the study of God in nature rather than in dialectic speculation.⁶ All the familiar formulae of the 'Abduh teaching are present: Islām is a religion of understanding and thought, not of *taḳlīd*; the study of the sciences, if rightly

¹ *Jamāl al-'ālam*, 2nd ed., Cairo, Hidāyah Press, 1329/1911.

² *Al-niẓām wa al-'ālam*, no date given.

³ Sir John Lubbock, first baron Avebury, 1834–1913.

⁴ Cf. above, p. 196.

⁵ Op. cit., p. 71.

⁶ Cf. Goldziher, *Koranauslegung*, p. 352.

understood, becomes a service of God ; veneration of prophets and saints is to be opposed ; exclusive adherence to one school of canon law is the source of rigidity and backwardness in Islām ; independent investigation (*ijtihād*) is the solution for all the ills of the time, &c.¹ What is said of his second work may be taken as characteristic of his attitude throughout, which is likewise the fundamental attitude of the 'Abduh school, namely, that it represents the Ḳur'ān as containing all that is essential for the solution of all problems.²

The present list may be completed by the addition of a final name on the authority of Dr. Philip K. Hitti, of Princeton University. He says of Shaikh 'Abduh al-Ḳādir al-Maghribī, that his writings 'breathe the same critical and liberal spirit as the two luminaries of modern Islām, Muḥammad 'Abduh and Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, whose pupil the author was'.³ A two-volume collection of essays by this author, on religious, social, literary, and historical subjects are reviewed by Dr. Hitti. These articles first appeared in the Egyptian press between the years 1906 and 1914. A number of illustrative passages from this work are cited, which establish the affinity of the author's doctrines with those of the 'Abduh school. It will be sufficient to quote what is there given as the author's main thesis: 'There is something wrong with Islām ; it should be reformed ; the reform should first begin as a religious movement ; this consists in a return to the precepts of the Ḳur'ān, the following of the sound laws of thinking and the rejection of many usages and traditions which have hitherto passed as Islāmic, but have in reality nothing to do with Islām.'⁴

¹ Hartmann, op. cit., pp. 60-2, 73-4.

² Ibid., p. 65.

³ *Jour. Amer. Orient. Soc.*, vol. xlvii, March 1927, pp. 78, 79.

⁴ Ibid., p. 78.

CHAPTER X

THE YOUNGER EGYPTIAN MODERNISTS

IT is to be remarked in what has preceded, that Dr. Tawfiḳ Ṣidqī is the only Egyptian writer of those who may be considered as belonging to the younger generation, aside from Farīd Wajdī who is somewhat older, of whom it may be said with considerable certainty that they belong to the school of Muḥammad 'Abduh. Ṣidqī is definitely claimed by *Al-Manār* as one of its group, and rightly so, as appears from his writings. But there is a group of modernist writers and scholars in Egypt at present, somewhat younger than Ṣidqī, who are displaying a marked literary activity of a progressive, in some cases extremely liberal, tendency, consideration of whose work has been reserved for the present chapter. It is natural to inquire to what extent the ideas of these leaders of modern Egyptian thought may have been influenced by those of Muḥammad 'Abduh. One thing which has an obvious bearing upon the subject, to begin with, is the fact that, when 'Abduh died in 1905, most of these men were still but youths, in the early stages of their education; they could not have had opportunity for personal contact with him for a very long time, nor have come under his personal influence to a great extent. Rashīd Riḍā, who, as nominally his successor, inherited his place of leadership, has shown himself more essentially conservative in his ideas and less tolerant in his sympathies than 'Abduh, and has, apparently, not been able to maintain the ascendancy of influence over the younger generation of thinkers which the latter might have exerted had he lived. Another factor which enters into the question and adds to the difficulty of determining the extent of 'Abduh's influence, is the fact that these men have experienced important literary and cultural contacts with the West, either through extended periods of residence in European universities, or through their study of the works of Western scholars, sometimes under the instruction of European scholars who were teaching in Egypt. Nevertheless, notwithstanding these considerations, it still remains certain that some, if not all, of these men have been

influenced by 'Abduh's ideas, if not directly, at least with respect to the spirit and attitude which they manifest in regard to modern problems. To discover, if possible, the extent of this influence with respect to certain individuals is the object of the present chapter.

Obviously, it will not be possible, within the limits of the present study, to pass in review the work of all the writers of the present day who deserve consideration, and whose names should be included were a general survey of modern Egyptian literature intended. It has seemed advisable, therefore, in view of the definite and limited aim in view, to choose three writers who are among the most important of the modernist group, and are, at the same time, sufficiently representative. These three are: Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq, Professor of Philosophy in the Egyptian University; Ṭāhā Ḥusain, until recently Professor of Arabic Literature in the same university; and 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq, brother of the first-named and formerly a judge in the Shari'ah Courts.

Among those whose names should be included in a wider study is Muḥammad Ḥusain Haikal (1888—), editor of *Al-Siyāsah*, who took his doctor's degree in political economy at Paris University.¹ His connexion with *Al-Jaridah*, already noted as indicating a certain amount of sympathy with the new ideas which were being promulgated by Luṭfi al-Sayyid and his group, was predominantly literary and nationalist in interest, rather than religious, as it has continued to be in his later connexion with *Al-Sufur*, the successor of *Al-Jaridah*, and with his own paper, *Al-Siyāsah*. His views do not belong in the direct line of succession from 'Abduh, as represented by *Al-Manār*, yet he is not entirely out of sympathy with some aspects of the movement, especially that represented by Kāsim Amīn, for whom Haikal expresses great admiration. Thus, for example, in explaining how he came to write his biographical sketches, after studying the leading characters of modern Egyptian history, he says that, from the time when he was a law student, he has given particular attention to all that Kāsim wrote and all that has been written about him,

¹ *Leaders in Contemporary Arabic Literature*, by Tāhir Khemīrī and Dr. G. Kampffmeyer, 1930, pp. 20 sqq.

and, as a result, Kāsim has left a particular influence upon his thought which he considers of the greatest value.¹

The possibility of direct influence by the ideas of 'Abduh in the case of 'Abbās Maḥmūd al-'Aḳḳād (1889–), and Ibrāhīm 'Abd al-Ḳādir al-Māzinī (1890–), is perhaps even more remote than in the case of Haikal, because of lack of personal relations or connexions with members of the 'Abduh circle. Al-'Aḳḳād was a friend of Sa'ad Pasha Zaghlūl, but during the later years when the political interests had become uppermost in the career of the latter. Al-Māzinī relates that he saw Muḥammad 'Abduh on two occasions, the first of which was when, as a boy of ten, he called at the home of 'Abduh, at the instance of an older brother, to solicit 'Abduh's help on behalf of the brother. 'Abduh received the boy kindly, although he was at the time surrounded by important visitors, and through his friend, Shaikh Abū Khaṭwah, granted the favour that was asked.² In the case of both Al-'Aḳḳād and Al-Māzinī, the predominant influence in shaping their literary ideals has been that of English literature.³ Yet both belong to that group of Egyptian writers who believe that it is possible for the East to borrow unstintingly from the literary and scientific treasures of the West without abandoning the essential Arabic-Islāmic character of its own culture and civilization.⁴ In this respect, Professor Gibb believes that both of them 'stand appreciably nearer to the conservative position than either Dr. Haykal or Dr. Ṭāhā Ḥusayn'.⁵

Dr. Maṣṣūr Fahmī (1886–), lecturer in Philosophy at the Egyptian University, is perhaps nearer in spirit to Muḥammad 'Abduh than any of the preceding. Dr. Maṣṣūr spent five years in France, specializing in philosophy at the Sorbonne, receiving his doctor's degree at the end of the period. His doctor's dissertation on *The Condition of Woman*

¹ *Tarājim*, p. 10.

² *Al-Siyāsah*, Supplement to No. 2733, February 26, 1932, 'Al-shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh', being a review of *Tārīkh*, i.

³ Khemīrī, *Leaders*, pp. 13, 28; Gibb, iii. 460 sqq.

⁴ *Al-Hilāl*, November 1931. Maṣṣūr Fahmī, *The Relation of the East to the Culture of the West*; Khemīrī, pp. 15, 29; Gibb, iii. 461.

⁵ Gibb, iii. 461.

in the Tradition and Evolution of Islām was a source of embarrassment to him on his return, in that the opposition which it aroused prevented him from entering upon his position at the Egyptian University for some years.¹ In the course of his address at the 'Abduh Memorial Gathering in 1922, he pays tribute to 'Abduh's greatness of character, his independence of thought and his ideals of education, and recalls the only occasion on which he had seen 'Abduh, namely, when he, as a schoolboy, saw the great man of whom he had heard so much pass by.² A collection of his essays, published in 1930 with the title, *Thoughts* ('Khaṭarāt nafs'), reveals a moral idealism, a regard for religion, a scorn for unyielding conservatism, a respect for free thought and for the right of every individual to exercise his powers of reason, that recall much that was best in the writings of 'Abduh himself, more in a certain kinship of outlook than in any distinctive phrase or turn of thought. At the same time, there is much that scarcely accords with 'Abduh's thought, as when he considers that the sentiments of artistic appreciation which are stirred by the contemplation of the beautiful in the human form (p. 29), or in the movements of Pavlova (p. 46) are near akin to the spiritual and lead to feelings of worship and reverence for the Great Artist. His conservatism and his progressiveness are alike illustrated in his charge to the Girls' Educational Mission as they were about to leave for study abroad: 'These (the parting prayers and advice of your parents) will cry out in your ears that you belong to a people who have a past and traditions, and that the past lays upon you this charge, that while you may change it, you must not despise it' (p. 134).

Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziḳ (1885-).

After this cursory glance at a few of the leading literary men of to-day, it is necessary to turn to the consideration of the three names that have been proposed for somewhat closer study. Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziḳ's connexion is more definite than anything that has met us in the case of the preceding names. He and his brother 'Alī are sons of that Ḥasan 'Abd

¹ Khemiri, p. 16, n. ² *Printed Report*, p. 28; *Al-Manār*, xxiii. 513 sqq.

al-Rāziḳ Pasha who was a close friend of 'Abduh and his associate in the Legislative Assembly, and who was leader of the People's Party in the year 1907. Both Muṣṭafā and 'Alī were pupils of 'Abduh in the Azhar University, the former for a longer time as he is somewhat the elder of the two brothers. Muṣṭafā was, in fact, one of the group of his pupils who were closest to him.¹ An interesting light is thrown upon the relations of the 'Abd al-Rāziḳ family to Muḥammad 'Abduh and the character of the influence which the latter exerted, in the fact, related by Rashīd Riḍā, that the members of the family had constituted themselves into a 'Society for the Cultivation of the Virtues', which held a meeting each week in their house. The meeting following the death of 'Abduh was in the nature of a memorial meeting, in which members of the family spoke in praise of him and lamented his death. Both Muṣṭafā and 'Alī spoke of themselves as his pupils.² Among the collected letters of 'Abduh, is one to Muṣṭafā who had sent to him some lines of poetry which he had written in eulogy of him. 'Abduh replies in an affectionate manner and concludes with the hope that Muṣṭafā's latter days may fulfil all the bright promises that can be discerned in his beginning.³

In 1909, after receiving the certificate of 'Ālim' from the Azhar, Muṣṭafā went to France, where he studied sociology and ethics under Durkheim and other noted teachers. On his return to Egypt, he served for a time as Secretary of Muslim Religious Institutions and later as Inspector of Shari'ah Courts. In 1927 he became Professor of Philosophy in the Egyptian University. Among his literary works are studies in the life and work and teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh, which show that he still maintains his loyalty to his former master.⁴ He collaborated with M. Bernard Michel in translating the *Risālat al-tawḥīd* into French, and he is the author of the excellent biography of 'Abduh and summary of his

¹ Statement in a private letter from 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziḳ, dated October 31, 1927.

² *Tārīkh*, iii. 210.

³ *Ibid.*, ii. 550.

⁴ His brother 'Alī, in the private letter mentioned above, states that, in his opinion, Muṣṭafā is the one of 'Abduh's pupils who best understands his principles and follows them most closely.

doctrines which constitute the introduction to the translation. During the winter of 1918-19 he delivered a series of lectures in the Egyptian University on 'The Life and Opinions of Shaikh 'Abduh', which, however, have not been published.¹ At the meeting in commemoration of the seventeenth anniversary of 'Abduh's death, he delivered the main address of the occasion, giving a summary of his biography. This address, together with the other addresses given on that occasion, was published in 1922, in commemoration of the anniversary.² It would seem, however, that although Muṣṭafā has maintained his advocacy of Muḥammad 'Abduh's principles, he is interested chiefly in the intellectual aspects of the renaissance introduced by 'Abduh rather than the religious. It is this fact which marks an essential difference of sympathy and purpose between him and the wing of 'Abduh's followers led by *Al-Manār*, who cling to the original design of religious reform; and in this intellectual interest he shows his kinship with the other members of the Modernist group who have little concern for moral or social reforms, but whose principal objective is to secure freedom of thought and independence of scientific research. Nevertheless, of the Modernist group he is the most closely related to 'Abduh and most directly carries on his tradition.

Ṭāhā Ḥusain (1889-).

At the opposite wing of the Modernist group is Dr. Ṭāhā Ḥusain. Although blinded as a result of illness at a very early age, he is a most brilliant student, who is fearlessly applying Western canons of literary criticism to the study of Arabic literature, in an endeavour to free such study from the trammels of ancient methods of criticism which have heretofore hampered it, and to raise Egyptian scholarship to a level of scientific efficiency comparable to that of Western scholarship. After securing his early education in a school in Upper Egypt, he entered the Azhar University where he remained for a number of years. But because of his independence of thought

¹ Cf. Michel, p. lxxxix.

² Ibid. Cf. *Printed Report*, pp. 10 sqq. The address is given also in *Al-Manār*, xxiii. 520-30.

the culture of that period.¹ He finds a number of motives which led to this poetry's being attributed to poets of the period before Islām whose names were famous: to promote political designs, to gratify national rivalries, to serve the purposes of narrators, story-tellers, grammarians, tradition-collectors, theologians, and commentators on the *Qur'ān*.

It is in his discussion of the religious motive that he has particularly aroused the ire of the orthodox. The pre-Islāmic poetry has been an apparently inexhaustible source from which proof and illustration have been drawn in support of the doctrines of Islām or to demonstrate the grammatical correctness and rhetorical elegance of the language of the *Qur'ān*. All of this poetry, which is so abundant, says Dr. Ṭāhā, that we might imagine that all the ancients were poets, has been fabricated to meet the exigencies in view; it has all been 'cut to measure'.² Furthermore, in the course of his work, he has given expression to ideas which have been taken as indications of a sinister purpose of unbelief on the author's part, as when he denies the legend of the founding of the 'Ka'abah' by Abraham and Ishmael and questions the historical existence of these two individuals, denies that the seven variant dialectical readings of the *Qur'ān*, which are commonly accepted as having emanated from Muḥammad himself, ever came from him, and denies that the religion of Islām was primarily the religion of Abraham and existed in Arabia before the time of Muḥammad.

But the chief significance of the book does not lie in its doubts and denials of Islāmic beliefs, although that is what has principally aroused opposition to it in orthodox circles, but in the critical methods of approach to the study of Arabic literature which it advocates. In his introductory chapters he severely criticizes the methods now in use in teaching Arabic literature, and throughout the book he levels his shafts of ridicule against the attitude which accepts everything which the ancients said, without criticism, taking everything on faith. The ancients themselves knew very little of criticism. 'It is my desire', he says, 'that we should not accept anything

¹ *Al-adab al-jāhilī*, 2nd ed., 1245/1927, p. 64.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 147, 148.

of what the ancients said about our literature and its history, except after examination and confirmation.' This new method of critical research will turn the old science upside down, he affirms.¹ The study of Arabic literature, he says further, if it is to be developed as it should, must be freed from its connexion with the theological sciences. At present it is studied simply as a means to the understanding of the *Qur'ān* and traditions, and if it were possible to understand them without it, it would not be studied at all. Arabic is regarded as a sacred language and is therefore not subjected to true scientific investigation. But if Arabic literature is to enjoy an existence suitable to the present day, the study of it should receive the same recognition, and should be conducted with the same independence and lack of interference, that are accorded to the study of medicine or any other recognized science. 'Why should I simply repeat what the ancients said or publish what they said? Why should I spend my life in praising the orthodox Sunnis or berating the heretical Shi'ites and Mu'tazilites and Khārijites, without any gain or any scientific purpose? Who can compel me to study literature to become a preacher of Islām or a guide to infidels, when I do not wish to preach nor to argue with infidels, but am content to keep my own religion as a matter between God and myself'.²

Thus Dr. Ṭahā proposes to make the study of Arabic literature a scientific procedure, free from all the presuppositions and prejudices, religious and otherwise, which have characterized it from the beginning; 'for the ancients were either Arabs prejudiced in favour of the Arabs, or non-Arabs prejudiced against them'.³ 'When we undertake the investigation of Arabic literature and its history', he says, 'we must forget our national feelings and all their specializing tendencies. We must forget our religious feelings and all that is connected with them'.⁴ The method which he himself proposes to follow in his inquiry is 'the course followed by modern scientists and philosophers in their treatment of science and philosophy. I propose to apply to literature the philosophical

¹ *Al-adab al-jāhili*, 2nd ed., 1245/1927, pp. 60, 61.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 55, 56.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

method originated by Descartes'.¹ It is thus evident throughout his work that he is not chiefly, if at all, concerned with the religious aspects of his studies. It is the scientific aspect, the desire to raise Egyptian scientific studies in the eyes of European scholars, that most concerns him. At the same time, he endeavours to minimize any unfavourable impression which his methods may make upon the public mind, by showing that it is possible to maintain, at one and the same time, the critical attitude of the scholar and the receptive attitude of faith. For example, he writes in the weekly issue of *Al-Siyāṣah* for July 17, 1926, as follows: 'Every one of us, if he but think a little, can discover in himself two distinct personalities: one a reasoning personality, that investigates, criticizes, makes solutions, changes to-day the opinion it held yesterday, tears down to-day what it built up yesterday; the other is a sentient personality, that feels delight, suffers, rejoices, sorrows, feels satisfaction or constraint, desires, fears, without criticism, investigation or search for solution. Both these personalities are connected with our constitution and make-up, and we cannot escape from either of them. What, then, is to hinder the first personality from being scholarly, inquisitive, critical, and the second believing, assured, aspiring towards the highest ideal?'² In accordance with this principle he affirmed in the course of his trial that, as a Muslim, he did not doubt the historical existence of Abraham and Ishmael and everything recorded in the *Qur'ān* concerning them, but, as a scholar, he is compelled to have strict regard for the methods of investigation and not assent to their historical existence except as established by scientific evidence.³

It is difficult to find definite points of contact with the teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh in the works of Ṭāhā Ḥusain. The latter entered the Azhar after 'Abduh had severed his connexion with that institution. He doubtless knew something of the principles of 'Abduh, whose revolt against the Azhar methods of his own day may have

¹ *Al-adab al-jāhili*, 2nd ed., 1245/1927, p. 67.

² Quoted in *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 377, in the report of the findings of the Court.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 377.

encouraged and inspired Ṭāhā's own tendency to independent thought. Yet, if even that much be true, his later studies in Greek and French literature in addition to Arabic, and all that he has learned of the technique of modern criticism from Western scholars, has so far predominated in moulding his thought and attitude that he does not acknowledge any connexion with the teachings of 'Abduh. It is certain, at any rate, that with the 'Abduh movement to-day, as represented by *Al-Manār*, he has not the slightest connexion. To Rashīd Riḍā, Dr. Ṭāhā and those of like faith with him represent an aggressive atheism that is usurping the institutions of the country and the very profession of teaching, in order to poison the minds of the young men of the country with their unbelief. He considers that the statements of Dr. Ṭāhā in his latest book are only the theories and deductions of the writer, without genuine proof, by means of which 'he has established his apostasy from Islām, and proved that he was estimating the results of his actions and their evil effects upon Muslims without concern'.¹ And it is doubtless to Dr. Ṭāhā's books that he refers when he discusses what he calls the modern propaganda in Egypt on behalf of unbelief, one of the agencies of which is 'books which defame the scholars of Islām like Al-Ghazzālī and Ibn Khaldūn, whom European scholars value highly, and bring forward those who were accused of atheism and unbelief, like Al-Ma'arrī, and sing the praises of the culture of those who were notorious for immorality and debauchery, such as Abū Nuwās'.²

'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq (1888—).

The position of 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq belongs somewhere between that of his brother Muṣṭafā and that of Ṭāhā Ḥusain. Not so radical as the latter nor so sceptical in matters of religion, he has not, on the other hand, shown as marked a tendency as his brother to adhere to the teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh; for, although he has been influenced, to a certain extent, by 'Abduh's ideas, he has advanced beyond them in many essential respects.

Born in a village of Middle Egypt in the year 1888, 'Alī

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxviii. 379.

² *Ibid.*, p. 119.

entered the Azhar University when he was about ten years of age. His early years in the institution were thus the closing years of Muḥammad 'Abduh's connexion with it. But his relation to 'Abduh would probably have been slight, because of his youth and his status as a beginner, had not the friendship which existed between his father and 'Abduh, and the additional fact that his elder brother was a pupil of the latter, secured opportunities for personal acquaintance which he would otherwise not have enjoyed: and he himself was a pupil of 'Abduh for a short time. He also studied canon law under Shaikh Aḥmad Abū Khaṭwah, a friend of 'Abduh, and, like him, a former pupil of Jamāl al-Dīn, although less decisive in his adherence to his principles.¹ Beginning with the year 1910, he attended lectures, for a year or two, in the new Egyptian University. Most important among the lectures attended were those of Professor Nallino, on the history of Arabic literature, and those of Professor Santillana on the history of philosophy. The final certificate was secured from the Azhar University in the year 1911. During the following year, he lectured in the Azhar on rhetoric and the history of its development as an Arabic science.² In the latter part of the same year, 1912, he went to England, and after a year spent in London in the study of English, he entered Oxford University, to pursue his studies for a degree in Economics and Political Science. After something more than a year's residence, however, he was compelled by the outbreak of the Great War to return to Egypt.

Following his return, he was, in 1915, appointed a judge in the Shari'ah Courts, in which capacity he served first in Alexandria, and later in other provincial courts. During his residence in Alexandria, he lectured in the Mosque School, which is affiliated with the Azhar University, on Arabic literature and Islāmic history. In the meantime, he had been pursuing investigations in connexion with the history of the Muslim judiciary, and, in 1925, he published the preliminary results of his investigations in a work on the Caliphate,

¹ Cf. above, p. 207.

² These lectures were published in 1912, under the title, *Amālī 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq fī 'ilm al-bayān wa tārikhihi*.

entitled *Islām and the Fundamentals of Authority*.¹ In this work he advocated the abolition of the Caliphate, and in the course of his argument took a number of other advanced positions which thoroughly aroused all the orthodox element of the country, especially the religious leaders. The greatest interest in the book was aroused, controversy raged concerning it, and on all sides the author was bitterly assailed. In a short time a number of books in reply had made their appearance, among them one by the former Grand Mufti of Egypt, Shaikh Muḥammad Bakhīt.²

The results so far as the author was concerned, did not all evaporate in discussions and invectives, however bitter. On August 12, 1925, a court consisting of twenty-four of the leading 'Ulamā of the Azhar, with the Shaikh al-Azhar at their head, met in conclave to hear the charges which were preferred against Shaikh 'Alī and his book. The Court rendered a unanimous decision confirming the charges of unorthodoxy in what he had written and declaring him guilty, on that account, of conduct 'unbecoming the character of an 'ālim'; sentence was therefore passed, dismissing him from the body of the 'Ulamā, and directing that his name be expunged from the records of the Azhar and the other mosque schools, that he be dismissed from office and henceforth be incapacitated from filling any office, religious or otherwise.³ The case was also considered by a disciplinary court of the Shari'ah Court Judiciary, to whom Shaikh 'Alī had appealed on the ground that the Court of the Azhar did not have jurisdiction in the matter, because the expression, 'conduct unbecoming an 'ālim', refers to matters of personal conduct. But the Court sustained the jurisdiction of the former court, since the 'expression was not limited in any way and might logically be held to include matters of belief as well as conduct'. When Shaikh 'Alī pleaded the right of 'absolute

¹ *Al-Islām wa uṣūl al-ḥukm*, Cairo, 'Miṣr' Press, 1344/1925. Two later editions have been published.

² *Ḥaqīqat al-Islām wa uṣūl al-ḥukm* ('The Truth about Islām and the Fundamentals of Authority'), Cairo, 1344/1926.

³ *Ḥukm hay'at al-'ulamā fī kitāb 'Ulamā re the book "Islam and the Fundamentals of Authority"*), 2nd ed., 1344/1925-6, pp. 31, 32.

freedom of belief' as guaranteed by the constitution of 1922, the Court replied that the guarantee of freedom was limited by the clause 'within the limits of the law', and could only be held to include freedom from civil or political disability on account of beliefs, and the right to maintain any belief that one chooses, so long as it is 'within the limits of the law'; moreover, the constitution does not interfere with the right of special regulation by such bodies as the Azhar concerning its 'Ulamā, or by the courts concerning their employees. The decision of the Azhar Court was therefore sustained; and, since by that decision Shaikh 'Alī is no longer to be considered 'one of the men of religion', and the position of judge in the Shari'ah Courts being a religious office, the decision of removal from office was also confirmed.¹

In this fashion the religious leaders of the country have testified to the new and startling character of the ideas to which Shaikh 'Alī has given expression, and have shown, further, that they fear the results of 'the dangerous way of thinking to which he has turned aside'.² The essential points in which his ideas differ from the orthodox doctrines are indicated in the following brief summary.³

First, the Caliphate as an Islāmic institution should be abolished. In theory, he shows, the Caliphate is regarded as a vice-regency on behalf of the Prophet in the two spheres of religious and secular life, held by those who have succeeded him in the government of the Islāmic community, and conferring upon them absolute authority in both spheres, except that they are required to rule in accordance with the Divine Law (*Shari'ah*) of Islām. But when the proofs, which are commonly adduced in support of this institution, are examined, they are found to be insufficient to sustain the claim of this specialized form of government. The first two sources of proof, the *Kur'ān* and the Traditions, yield only general and indefinite statements that, rightly interpreted, afford no support. The third proof, that of the Agreement of Muslim public opinion from the earliest times, in believing that the

¹ *Decision of the Court*, pp. 37-40.

² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³ Lammens, in *L'Islām: Croyances et Institutions*, Bairūt, 1926, pp. 226-7, gives a brief summary of 'Alī's views.

setting up of a caliph is a duty incumbent upon the Muslim people as a whole, cannot, he argues, be established as an historical fact. For there have always been movements of dissent and rebellion against the Caliphate, of varying degrees of strength and importance, from the days of 'Alī, the fourth Caliph, to the Committee of Union and Progress in Turkey. Such exceptions invalidate the idea of the Agreement. The fourth proof, that the material welfare of the Muslims and the maintenance of the religious cultus depend upon the existence of the Caliphate, is true only in so far as some form of government is necessary, which is a generally acknowledged fact; but it is not true of the Caliphate as defined by the Muslim doctors. 'It is not the will of God that the strength or weakness of Islām should be bound up with one particular form of government nor one special order of rulers; nor does He will that the moral progress or deterioration of the Muslims should be the pawn of the Caliphate nor at the mercy of the Caliphs.'¹ 'We have no need then', he concludes, 'for this Caliphate, neither in the affairs of our religious life, nor in those of our civil life. For the Caliphate has always been, and continues to be, a misfortune to Islām and to the Muslims and the source of evil and corruption.'²

Second, the very idea of the Caliphate, as both a civil and religious hegemony in succession to and on behalf of the Prophet, rests upon a mistaken conception of the Prophet's purpose and the nature of the Apostolic office which he filled. It is very difficult to ascertain anything definite concerning the form of the Prophet's government, he cautions, because of the obscurity which surrounds the whole subject. Regarding the judiciary, it is certain that some cases of litigation were referred to him for his decision; but the traditions concerning them are 'not sufficient to give us a clear picture of such action nor of what procedure it may have followed, if, indeed, it followed any fixed procedure'.³ Other important departments of government are equally shrouded in obscurity or lacking entirely. Various explanations that may be given to account for this significant fact are considered; but the only

¹ *Al-Islām wa uṣūl al-ḥukm*, 2nd ed., 1925, p. 38.

² *Ibid.*, p. 36.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

explanation which is acceptable to the author is that Muḥammad did not attempt to found a state, nor was it part of his apostolic mission to do so. 'Muḥammad was but an apostle, sent on behalf of a religious summons, one pertaining entirely to religion and unmarred by any taint of monarchy or of summons to a political state; and he possessed neither kingly rule nor government, and he was not charged with the task of founding a kingdom in the political sense, as this word and its synonyms are generally understood.'¹ His authority was both universal and absolute; but it was 'the authority of the prophetic office, not the authority of sultans'.² That the distinction between the two kinds of authority, the religious and the civil, the one exercised by the Prophet, the other not, might be kept clear, the author repeats his warning that the reader 'should not confuse the two kinds of authority, nor the two kinds of supremacy: the supremacy of the Apostle as an apostle, and the supremacy of kings and princes'.³

It is true, the author admits, that there were present in the Prophet's government certain outward forms that rightly belong to the government of a modern state; but, in total, they are but a small part of what a state should have;⁴ and they are, after all, not measures of state, but only 'various measures to which Muḥammad had recourse for the establishment of his religion and the reinforcement of his summons'.⁵ Thus the author lays the foundation for the separation of Church and State in the essential nature of Islām.

Third, since the authority of Muḥammad was spiritual and not political, and the unity which he came to establish was religious not political, the conception of a 'succession' to his authority falls of itself. He was a prophet and an apostle, sent for a peculiar mission. This mission he performed in the completion of the religion of Islām and the accomplishment of the religious unity of his followers. His mission was thus completed and his work came to an end with his death. There was, therefore, no necessity for a religious leader to succeed him. He had exercised no political authority and therefore transmitted none; that this was his intention is evident from

¹ *Al-Islām wa uṣūl al-ḥukm*, 2nd ed., 1925, pp. 64, 65.

² *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

the fact that he named no successor. After his death, the Muslims realized that they could not return to their former state and that they must organize some form of government, and this they proceeded to do by choosing Abū Bakr for the position of command. But his rule was not in any sense religious; he was a political ruler simply, who had been chosen to govern the new Arab state that had come into existence by the action of the Muslims.¹ For particular reasons operating at the time, the title 'caliph' was applied to Abū Bakr and his successors; and in time a religious significance came to attach to the title, which was, for obvious reasons, fostered by the Caliphs themselves.²

Fourth, it follows from the spiritual character of the Prophet's authority as just described, that the Divine Law which he brought for the guidance of his followers was concerned only with religious affairs, intended to regulate the relation between God and man; it did not have in view the regulation of civil affairs. 'All that Islām prescribed as law, and all that the Prophet imposed upon the Muslims in the way of regulations and rules and moral principles, had nothing at all to do with methods of political rule, nor with the regulations of a civil state.'³ All the prescriptions of Islām constitute 'a religious code only, entirely concerned with the service of God and the religious welfare of mankind, nothing else'.⁴ As for civil laws, these are left to men, to develop according to their knowledge and experience. 'The world is of too little concern in the sight of God, for Him to appoint for its management any other arrangement than the minds which He has bestowed upon us.'⁵ Thus the author frees Muslim civil life from the incubus of the vast body of canon law, with its sacrosanct, unchangeable character, not by reforming it, as *Al-Manār*, which agrees with him regarding the evil effects of its rigidity, desires, but in abandoning it entirely as a civil code. Thus, the author's final conclusion is: 'There is nothing in the religion (of Islām) to prevent the Muslims . . . from tearing down that ancient order to which they have been subjugated and under which they have been humbled; and

¹ *Al-Islām wa uṣūl al-ḥukm*, 2nd ed., 1925, pp. 92 sqq.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 102 sqq. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 84. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85. ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

from building up the rules of their kingdom and the order of their government upon the most recent conclusions arrived at by the minds of men, and the most assured results which the experiments of the nations have indicated to be the best principles of government.’¹

All that Shaikh ‘Alī has said with reference to abolition of the Caliphate is manifestly contrary to the general Muslim belief, which has cherished the doctrine of the Caliphate to the present day, although the historic Caliphate disappeared centuries ago. Shaikh ‘Alī has, in fact, so far as his denial of the Caliphate is concerned, placed himself ‘in the category of the Khārijites, not of the majority of the Muslims’, as the Azhar Court declared.² In this respect, it is in place here to point out, he is equally opposed to the position of *Al-Manār*, which is thoroughly orthodox in the matter of the Caliphate. Rashīd Riḍā, in his book on the Caliphate, appeals to the support of the Qur’ān, ‘Traditions and Agreement, in the usual manner.’³ He is accustomed, it is true, to make much of the ideas of popular election of the Caliph, and of ‘representative government’ and ‘democracy’, ideas potent in present-day political thought, all of which were anticipated in the principles of Islām, according to his interpretation; but all of these are to be realized through retention of the Caliphate. He proposes to the Turks that they consider their present form of government, the republic, as only temporary, and that the matter of the Caliphate be left to the decision of a Congress on the Caliphate, to consist of representatives from all Muslim countries.⁴ Such a Congress did convene in Cairo on May 13, 1926. Rashīd Riḍā laid before this Congress a ‘programme of the Caliphate suitable for the present age’, which would limit the autocratic power of the Caliph and secure the general acceptance of the Caliphate by all Muslim countries. Among its proposals were: the founding of a school for the training of the candidates for the Caliphate, and of men authoritatively informed in matters of government (*mujtahids*); the statutes and the organization of the state

¹ *Al-Islām wa uṣūl al-ḥukm*, 2nd ed., 1925, p. 103.

² *Decision of the Court*, p. 24.

³ *Al-khilāfah aw al-imāmah al-‘uzmā*, Cairo, 1341/1922, pp. 9 sqq. The material first appeared in *Al-Manār*, vols. xxiii and xxiv.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

within the domains of the Caliphate to be according to the Divine Law of Islām, revised according to the principles of *Al-Manār*; Muslim nations that are not independent and therefore unable to render political allegiance to the Caliph, to be related to the Caliphate only in their religious affairs, such as the purely religious support and defence of Islām, suppression of innovations, type of religious education, &c., with avoidance of political entanglements.¹

In the matter of the separation of Church and State and the abandonment of the system of canon law as a civil code, 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq is equally at variance with Muslim thought, which believes that Muḥammad was the founder of a state as well as of a religion, and that the system of canon law is essentially a Divine enactment, applicable to civil life as well as to religious matters. The Azhar Court expressed its sense of the peculiarity of Shaikh 'Alī's view by saying that 'he is satisfied with a way of thinking that is all his own'.² Muḥammad 'Abduh, with all his emphasis upon the spiritual character of religious exercises, defended the union of the civil and religious authority in Islām,³ and favoured retention of the essentials of the system of canon law, although with far-reaching reforms; while *Al-Manār* states explicitly and unequivocally, 'the assertion that the Government and the State should be separated from religion, is one that necessitates the blotting of Islāmic authority out of existence, and abrogating entirely the Islāmic Shari'ah'. Were Muslims to adopt the Christian position on the matter 'we should have laid aside half of our religion'.⁴

If any relation exists between the thought of Shaikh 'Alī and the doctrines of Muḥammad 'Abduh, it is to be sought for in a certain spiritual and intellectual affinity, rather than in individual ideas.⁵ His historical approach to his subject, through a study of Islāmic beginnings, which is not dissimilar in method to that of 'Abduh in the historical introduction to

¹ *Al-Manār*, xxvii. 138-43.

² *Decision of the Court*, p. 19.

³ e.g. in *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah*, pp. 61 sqq.

⁴ *Al-Manār*, ii. 357, 358.

⁵ In the private letter previously mentioned, Shaikh 'Alī acknowledges that he may be indebted to a certain extent to the works of 'Abduh, which he formerly read and greatly admired.

his *Risālat al-tawhīd*; his conception of Islām as a spiritual religion, although he dissociates it from all political connexions, which 'Abduh did not do; his admission of the reasonable possibility of a universal religion, which embraces all men in a religious unity, apart, however, from political unity; his general tendency to differ in thought and attitude from 'those who know religion only as a hard and fast form';¹ above all, the independence of his thought and the breadth of his view; these and other points of resemblance seem to indicate that he has been definitely influenced by 'Abduh and has imbibed much of his spirit. On the other hand, his more liberal and revolutionary points of view are unquestionable. The influence of Western scholarship is seen in his critical methods and in his impatience with the methods of Islāmic historians and biographers; and also in his general treatment of the Caliphate. In his attempt to treat his sources in a critical and scholarly manner, and in the concessions which he is willing to make to modern conditions, he shows his affinity with the more radical group of Modernists represented by Dr. Ṭāhā Ḥusain. To *Al-Manār*, he has become 'an enemy of religion', although formerly he had been 'counted as a friend and helper in opposing unbelief and vice'.²

On the whole, it may be concluded with some confidence that 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq belongs in a spiritual and intellectual succession with Muḥammad 'Abduh; and that he and his brother Muṣṭafā, while exhibiting characteristic differences in interpretation, the one from the other, together represent a modern and liberal development of the movement which 'Abduh inaugurated. In regard to other members of the Modern school, of whom Dr. Ṭāhā Ḥusain may be considered representative, it is not possible to reach such definite conclusions. At the same time, much can be discovered in their aims, ideals and outlook that indicates their indebtedness to 'Abduh and the work which he accomplished;³ and it is perhaps not overstating the case to say that the very existence of the Modern school derives in a vital and fundamental sense from him.

¹ *Al-Islām wa uṣūl al-ḥukm*, 2nd ed., 1925, p. 47.

² *Al-Manār*, xxvii. 717.

³ Cf. Gibb, i. 758.

APPENDIX

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THE following works, in addition to those referred to in the footnotes, have been consulted. Abbreviations are noted for those works that are most frequently referred to in the text.

A. WORKS ABOUT JAMĀL AL-DĪN AL-AFGHĀNĪ

- Pers. Rev. The Persian Revolution*, E. G. Browne, 1909, biography in Chapter I.
- Enc. Islām. Encyclopedia of Islām*, article 'Djamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī' by Goldziher—with bibliography.
- History of Arabic Journalism* ('Tārīkh al-ṣaḥāfah al-'arabiyyah'), by Vicomte Filib dī Tarāzī, Bairūt, Al-Adabiyyah Press, 1913, pp. 293-9.
- Mashāhīr. Eastern Celebrities* ('Mashāhīr al-sharḥ'), by Jirjī Zaidān, vol. ii, pp. 52-61. This account is reproduced from the Arabic periodical *Al-Hilāl*, April 1, 1897. The same account appears also as the introduction to the Arabic translation of Jamāl's work, *Refutation of the Materialists* ('Al-radd 'alā al-dahriyyīn'), 1925 edition, Cairo. Other editions contain different biographies.
- Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah*, latest edition, Cairo, 1346/1928, biography of Jamāl by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq, pp. 1-14.
- Predestination* ('Al-ḥaḍā wa al-ḥadar'), by Jamāl, brief biography in introduction. Cairo, no date.
- Al-Manūr*, vols. i-xxviii, frequent references. Articles by Jamāl.
- Biographies* of Muḥammad 'Abduh all give some account of Jamāl. See below.

B. WORKS ABOUT MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH

- Koranauslegung. Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung* Goldziher, pp. 320-70. Deals with 'Abduh's interpretation of the Qur'ān but contains also a valuable summary of his ideas.
- Beiträge. Muhammad Abduh: sein Leben und seine theologisch-philosophische Gedankenwelt*, Horten, in *Beiträge zur Kenntniss des Orients*, vol. xiii, 1915, pp. 85-114, on biography; vol. xiv, 1916, pp. 74-128, on doctrine.
- Michel, *Risālah. Cheikh Mohammed Abdou: Rissalat al Tawhid*, B. Michel et le Cheikh Moustapha Abdel Razik, Paris, 1925.

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Al-Manār, vol. viii, 1905, by index, biography by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā. All the volumes contain articles by Muḥammad 'Abduh, references to his life, doctrines, &c.

Tārīkh. *Tārīkh al-ustādh al-imām al-shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh*, biography by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, in three volumes. Vol. ii, containing his principal articles and briefer works, collected from various sources, was published 1908. Vol. iii, containing biographical and eulogistic accounts which appeared at the time of his death, letters and telegrams of condolence, &c., published on the fifth anniversary of his death, 1910. Later editions. Vol. i, pp. 1134, containing full biography, published latter part of 1931. Al-Manār Press, Cairo.

Mashāhīr, vol. i, pp. 281 sqq. The same account appears in *History of Arabic Journalism*, pp. 287-93.

Printed Report. *Al-ih̥tifāl bi ih̥yā dhikrā al-ustādh al-imām al-shaikh Muḥammad 'Abduh*, printed report of addresses on occasion of seventeenth anniversary of 'Abduh's death, July 11, 1922. On biography of 'Abduh, pp. 10-28, by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq. Same in *Al-Manār*, xxiii. 520-30.

Weekly Siyāsah, June 4, 1927, article by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq.

Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqah, Cairo, 1346/1928, pp. 15-22, biography of 'Abduh, by Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq.

L'Islām: Croyances et Institutions, H. Lammens, Bairūt, 1926, pp. 223 sqq. and 229-34, brief discussion of Modernism in Egypt and the work of Muḥammad 'Abduh and *Al-Manār*.

Secret History of Egypt, W. S. Blunt, London, 1907, New York, 1922, for 'Abduh's relation to the 'Arābī Rebellion.

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Les Penseurs de l'Islām, Baron Carra de Vaux, Paris, 1926, vol. v, 'Les sectes—Le Libéralisme Moderne', pp. 254-67, brief biography of 'Abduh, his reforms in the Azhar, and his controversy with M. Hanotaux. In the same volume: on Shaikh Ṭanṭāwī Jawharī, pp. 275-84; on Muṣṭafā Kāmil Pasha and Egyptian Nationalism, pp. 285-96; on Sa'ad Pasha Zaghlūl and recent political developments in which he was concerned, pp. 296-306.

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Oriental Studies, London Institution, 1928-30. I. The Nineteenth Century. II. Manfalūṭi and the 'New Style'. III. Egyptian Modernists. Valuable account of the development of modern Arabic literature and characterizations of some of the leading writers. Discussion of Muḥammad 'Abduh and his influence.

Khemirī, *Leaders in Contemporary Arabic Literature*, Tāhir Khemirī and Professor Dr. G. Kampffmeyer, 1930, biographical sketches of some of the leading writers, their works and their views. Very useful.

C. THE LITERARY WORKS OF MUḤAMMAD 'ABDUH

The principal works of Muḥammad 'Abduh have been mentioned in the preceding pages but for the sake of convenience are recapitulated here. A list of his writings in approximate chronological order is given in *Al-Manār*, vol. viii, p. 492. Lists are found also in the Introduction to the French translation of *Risālat al-tawḥīd* by M. Michel and Shaikh Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Rāziq, pp. lxxxvii, lxxxviii, and in Professor M. Horten's account of the life and teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh in *Beiträge zur Kenntniss des Orients*, vol. xiv, pp. 83-5. The latter list is not complete as it mentions only the works which were utilized by the writer in compiling his review of the ideas of Muḥammad 'Abduh. The list of M. Michel is mainly followed in the list given here as it is practically complete, with the exception of one or two items included below.

1. *Risālat al-wāridāt*, 'Treatise consisting of Mystic Inspirations'. Cairo, 1290/1874, reprinted in *Tārīkh al-Ustādh al-Imām*, vol. ii, pp. 1-25. Cf. above, pp. 40-41.
2. *Ḥāshiyah 'alā Sharḥ al-Dawānī li al-'akā'id al-'Aquliyyah*, 'Collection of glosses on "The Commentary of Al-Dawānī on Al-'Aqūd's work on The Articles of Belief"'. Cairo, 1292/1876, reprinted Cairo, 1322/1904. Cf. above, p. 41.
3. *Al-radd 'alā al-dahriyyīn*, 'Reply to the Materialists', translation from the Persian into Arabic of the work of Al-Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī. 1st edition, Bairūt, 1303/1886, 2nd edition, Cairo, 1312/1895, reprinted several times, the most recent 1344/1925. It contains a brief biography of Jamāl al-Dīn, reprinted from the magazine *Al-Hilāl*, which is the same as that which appears in *Mashāhīr al-Sharḥ*, vol. ii, pp. 52-61. Cf. above, p. 15, n. 1.
4. *Sharḥ nahj al-balāghah*, 'Commentary on "The Highway of

- Eloquence"', a work on rhetoric. Cf. above, p. 65, n. 2. 1st edition, Bairūt, 1302/1885, reprinted several times at Cairo.
5. *Sharḥ maḳāmāt Badī' al-zamān al-Hamadhānī*, 'Commentary on "The Assemblies" of Badī' al-zamān al-Hamadhānī'. Cf. above, p. 65, n. 3. Bairūt, 1306/1889.
 6. *Risālat al-tawḥīd*, 'Treatise on the Unity of God', a work on theology. 1st edition, Cairo, 1315/1897, 2nd edition, with notes by Muḥammad Rashīd Ridā, 1326/1908. Further notes were added in later editions. The 5th edition, Cairo, 1346/1926-7, was carefully revised and further notes added. Cf. above, p. 76, n. 3.
 7. *Sharḥ Kitāb al-baṣā'ir al-Nuṣairiyyah fī 'ilm al-mantīk taṣnīf al-ḳāḍī al-Zāhid Zain al-Dīn 'Umar ibn Sahlān al-Sawī*, 'Commentary on "Results of Reflective Insight in the Science of Logic attributed to Nuṣair" by Al-ḳāḍī Zain al-dīn'. Edited for the first time and commented on by Muḥammad 'Abduh. Cairo, 1316/1898.
 8. *Takrīr fī iṣlāḥ al-maḥākīm al-shar'iyyah*, 'Report on Reform of the Sharī'ah Courts'. Cairo, 1318/1900. It appears also in *Al-Manār*, vol. ii. Cf. above, p. 81, n. 6.
 9. *Al-Islām wa al-radd 'alā muntaḳidih*, 'Islām and the Reply to its Critics'. A series of articles which appeared in 1900 in the newspaper *Al-Mu'ayyad* in reply to articles by M. Hanotaux which appeared in *Le Journal de Paris*. Cf. above, pp. 86 sqq. Translated into French by M. Tala'at Bey Ḥarb and published under the title, *L'Europe et l'Islām*, Cairo, 1905. Collected and published in Arabic under the above title, together with a number of other articles by Muḥammad 'Abduh and others, 1327/1909. Cf. above, p. 89, n. 1. Reprinted since, most recently 1343/1924, 1925.
 10. *Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyyah ma' al-'Ilm wa al-Madaniyyah*, 'Islām and Christianity and their Respective Attitudes towards Learning and Civilization'. A series of articles which appeared first in *Al-Manār*, 1901, in reply to articles in the magazine *Al-Jāmi'ah*, by Farah Anṭūn. Printed separately, Cairo, 1320/1902. Reprinted since, 3rd edition, 1341/1922, 1923. Cf. above, p. 90, n. 1.
 11. *Al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ*, a work on Arabic philology, by Ibn Sīdah, in 17 volumes. Edited by Muḥammad 'Abduh, with the help of Shaikh Muḥammad al-Shankīṭī and others, Cairo, 1316/1896 onwards. Muḥammad 'Abduh also edited *Asrār al-balāghah*

and *Dalā'il al-i'jāz*, by 'Abd al-Kāhir al-Jurjānī. Cf. above, p. 85, nn. 6 and 8.

12. *Tafsīr sūrat al-fātiḥah*, 'Commentary on the first chapter of the Qur'ān', entitled *Al-fātiḥah*. Cairo, 1323/1905, 2nd edition, 1330/1911.
13. *Tafsīr sūrat al-'aṣr*, 'Commentary on Chapter 103 of the Qur'ān', entitled *Al-'aṣr* ('The Afternoon'). Printed first in *Al-Manār*. Printed separately, Cairo, 1321/1903, reprinted since.
14. *Tafsīr juz' 'amma*, Commentary on the last thirty-seven chapters of the Qur'ān, 78 to 114 inclusive. Printed first in *Al-Manār*. Printed separately, Cairo, 1322/1904.
15. *Tafsīr al-Kur'ān al-ḥakīm*, 'Commentary on the Qur'ān', otherwise known as *Tafsīr al-Manār* ('The Manār Commentary'). Cf. above, p. 76, n. 3. This Commentary was to have embraced the whole Qur'ān but was carried during Muḥammad 'Abduh's lifetime only as far as Chapter 4, verse 125 (*Sūrat al-nisā*). It has since been carried by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā as far as *Sūrat al-tawbah*, Chapter 9, verse 93. Ten volumes have thus far appeared, the last printed 1350/1931. Vol. 1, which as first printed was not uniform in style with later volumes, has been finally revised and enlarged to agree with them and has appeared November, 1927.

In addition to the above works which were published, Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā mentions in his list a number of works written by Muḥammad 'Abduh but never published. They are as follows:

16. *Risālah fī waḥdat al-wujūd*, 'Treatise on the Unity of Existence'. Cf. above, p. 41, n. 1.
17. *Tārīkh Ismā'il Bāshā*, 'History of (the Khedive) Ismā'il Pasha'. Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā says that he had been told that Muḥammad 'Abduh had written such a history but the work was unknown to him. *Al-Manār*, viii. 492.
18. *Falsafat al-ijtimā' wa al-tārīkh*, 'Philosophy of Society and History'. This work embodied his lectures on the 'Prolegomena' of Ibn Khaldūn which were delivered in the Dār al-'Ulūm, 1878-9. The manuscript was lost when he was removed from the school and compelled by the Khedive to retire to his village. Cf. above, p. 46.
19. *Nizām al-tarbiyah al-Miṣriyyah*, 'The System of Education in Egypt'.
20. *Tārīkh asbāb al-thawrah al-'Arābiyyah*, 'History of the Causes

of the 'Arābī Rebellion'. This was not completed. Part of it is given in *Tārīkh*, i. 159 sqq.

Account has been given in chapters II–IV of the numerous articles contributed by Muḥammad 'Abduh to *Al-Ahrām* and *Al-Wakā'i' al-Miṣriyyah* ('Journal Officiel'), cf. pp. 37 sqq., and 49 sqq.; to *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthkāk*, cf. pp. 58 sqq.; to *Thamarāt al-funūn* of Bairūt, cf. p. 65, n. 4; to *Al-Mu'ayyad* and *Al-Manār*, cf. pp. 87 sqq., and 89 sqq. The most important of these articles have been collected and published by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā in vol. ii of his biography of Muḥammad 'Abduh, *Tārīkh al-Ustādh al-Imām*.

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